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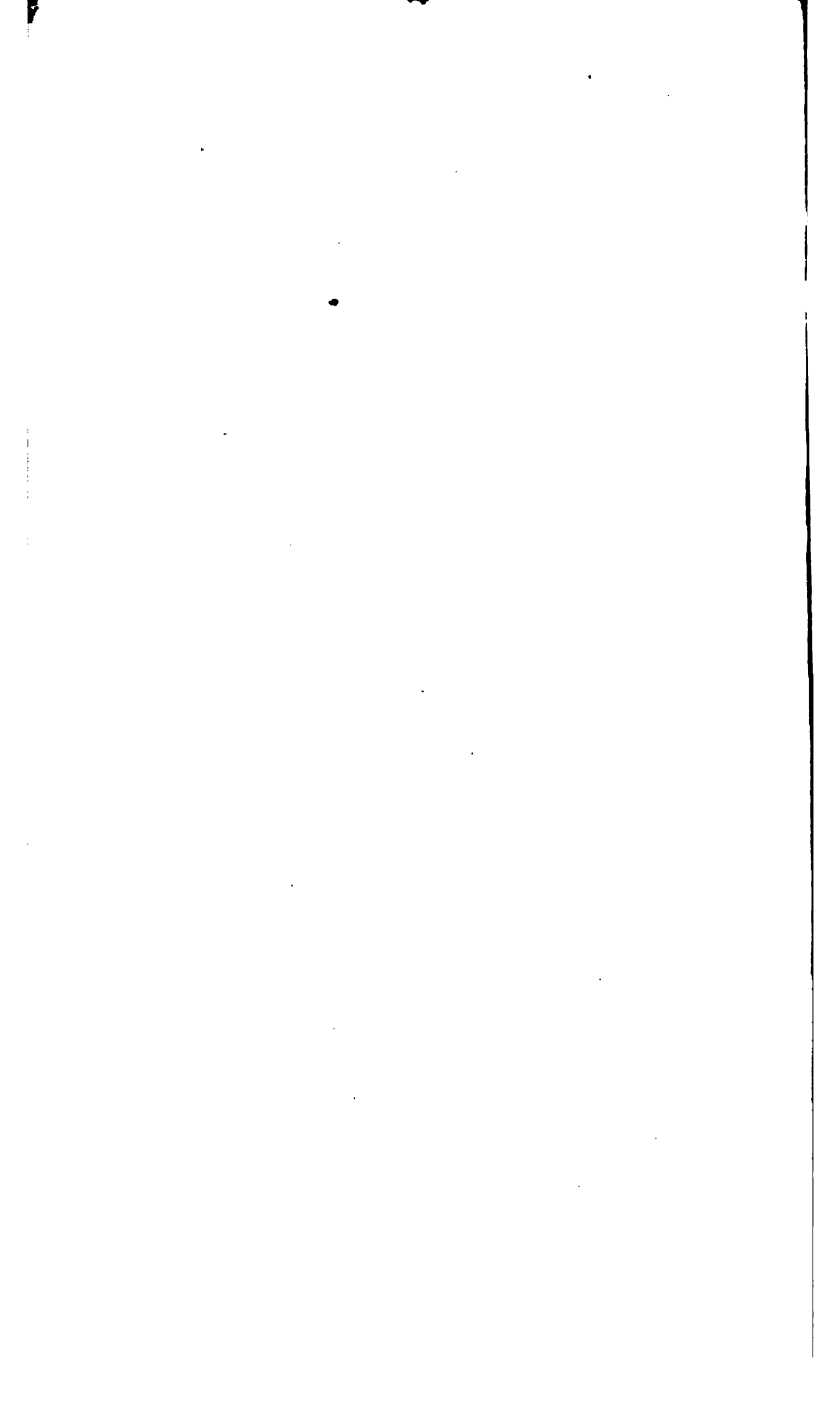


FROM
THE GIFT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH





THE BRIDAL NIGHT.



THE BRIDAL NIGHT;

THE FIRST POET;

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY DUGALD MOORE,

AUTHOR OF "THE AFRICAN," "SCENES FROM THE FLOOD," &c.

GLASGOW :

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TO

MY MOTHER,

IN SINCERE REMEMBRANCE

OF HUMBLE AND UNKNOWN WORTH

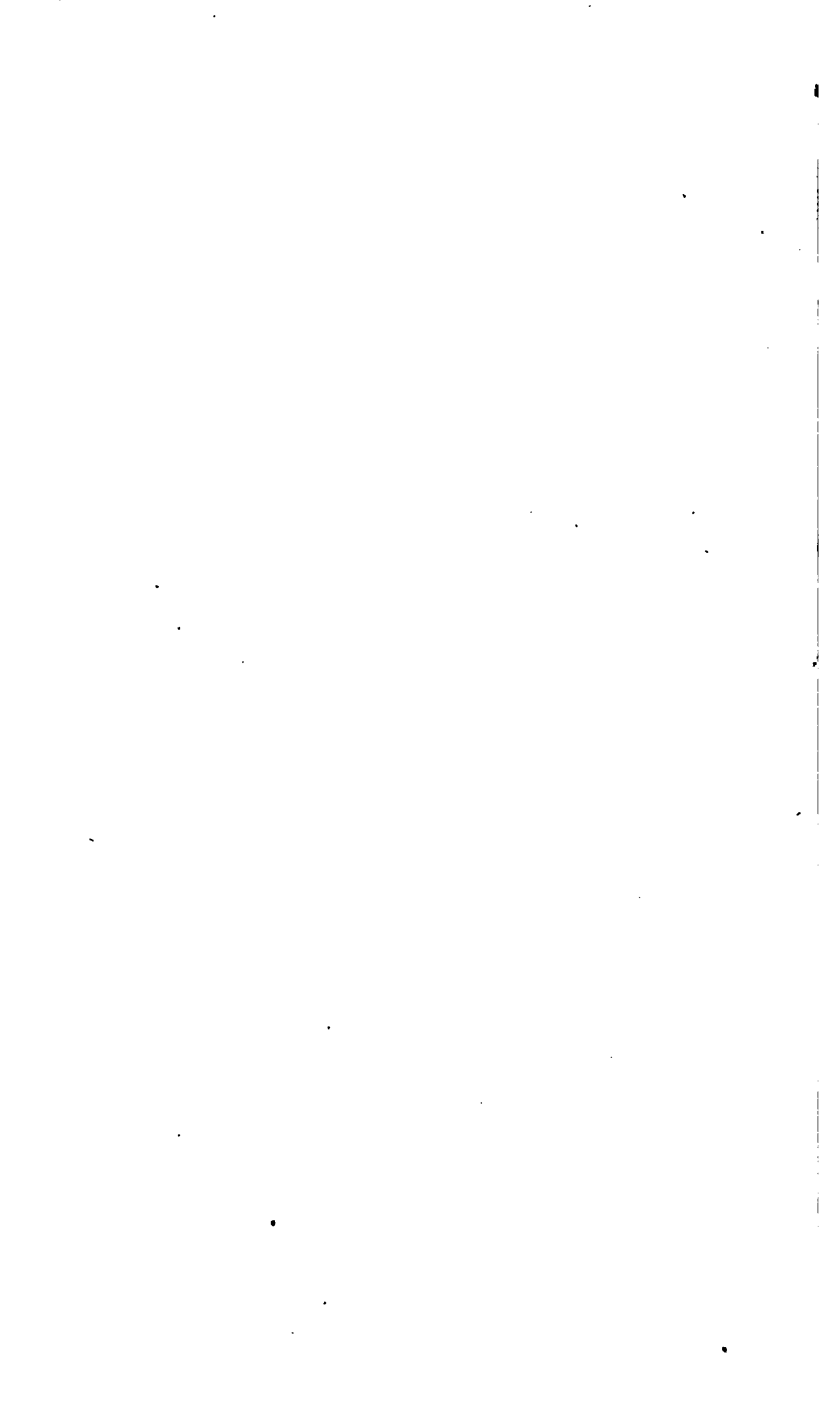
AND VIRTUOUS FORTITUDE,

DISPLAYED THROUGH A LIFE OF SEVERE HARDSHIP,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

BY HER AFFECTIONATE SON,

THE AUTHOR.



THE BRIDAL NIGHT.



THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

DAY sets in glory o'er the Ionian sea,
Night gathers round him like eternity ;
And all is hush'd, as if the rosy mouth
Of love breathed o'er his own delicious south.
'Tis one of those sweet eves, so calm, so clear,
And living, that you almost think you hear,
In the warm air, the very wild-flowers grow,
And the young blood through their green channels flow.
Joy seems to breathe his songs in every bower,
As if Death's foot had never crush'd a flower ;
While music floats along the twilight deep,
As nature saw bright visions in her sleep,

And, like an infant through a glorious dream,
Murmur'd delight from every hill and stream !
The winds lie wearied with their morning chase,
Embraced by silence in the halls of space ;
And as the gorgeous clouds to darkness pass,
You see the stars, in many a fairy mass,
Laughing along the desert of the air,
Apart, or group'd, like happy lovers there ;
While the warm breeze that slowly warbles by,
Wanders away, like pleasure, with a sigh.

II.

A bark is on the ocean—faint and far
Its white sail glitters 'neath the evening star,
That, climbing the blue east, like Luna's daughter,
Lifts her calm eyelids on the dreaming water.
Before that prow the sleeping billows fly—
And, hark ! the echo of its chieftain's cry :
“ Hold to your oars ! though night be gathering dark,
Yet she has eyes, and we a gallant bark :
The one will guide us like the looks of love ;
The other bear away our captive dove,
Who long has gazed across the deep, that she
Might view this love-ark drifting o'er the sea.

Then strain the oar! our virgin will not sleep,
When love and liberty are on the deep.
We lack not valour, but we lack the power
To wrest her from him in the open hour :
For, oh ! more glorious to my soul would be,
Beneath the sun, our fight and victory,
Than grappling with the despot in the dark—
But he has hosts, and many an armed bark ;
A thousand turbans bow before his call,
A thousand sabres glitter in his hall.
But we shall rouse him at the midnight hour,
With havoc's warcry ringing through his tower :
None shall escape, none but my beauteous bride,
And we will bear her to the laughing tide,
Where, like the ocean birds, we'll drift alone,
O'er a blue world of waters all our own!"

III.

A wild hurra from his sea-beaten crew
Told him their stormy hearts were his and true :
They gave him what he wish'd—a wild reply
Spoke by the sparkle of each savage eye.
The white sheet, fluttering in the sportive blast,
Is furl'd by warrior arms around the mast ;

The ship more slowly cuts the glassy tide,
Whose snowy ridges kiss her oozy side ;
The sky above them wears a deeper hue,
The sea around assumes a colder blue ;
Light's latest day-beam lingers in the west,
Like life's last warmth within the quivering breast ;
The white birds, sporting o'er the feathery spray,
Begin to wing their passage to the bay ;
Eve droops in beauty, like the first calm night
That fell upon creation, ere the flight
Of death and time, towards our infant sphere,
Broke like a tempest on her dreaming ear.

IV.

But who is he whose scarf and eagle crest
Float on the sea-breeze high above the rest ?
A Hero of the isles—a child of Greece,
A spirit form'd not for an age of peace !
'Twas not for him, when liberty was gone,
To kiss the hand that braced his fetters on.
No ! oft he let his roving foemen see
How dearly home was valued by the free.
Born with the tyrant's fetters in his view,
He drank revenge with life ; and, as he grew,

His soul expanded in her dreams of hate
To them who made his country desolate.
Though born to power, the tyrant's arm had reft
Each link away, till he alone was left
With nothing but the desert for his hall,
Vengeance his birthright, and the sword his all.
Though hunted like the tiger in his lair,
He never felt the sickness of despair ;
Contempt of life, and danger, ever near,
Chased from his lion-spirit every fear.
He sought no home—no shelter but the sea ;
No wealth—but souls as fearless and as free
As the wide waste of waves that welcomed them
To earn—if not a saint's, a hero's fame.
His was a soul unsullied by the chain,
An arm too strong to strike, and strike in vain !
His gloomy spirit in that mould was cast
Which lov'd to hold communion with the past.
Oft in the dear delusion of his brain,
He fought his country's battles o'er again.
The very sky that girdled his fair land
Made his young bosom into love expand ;
A tone of music, piped, however rude,
By the bold shepherds of the solitude,

Could whirl his spirit in its tide along :—
Oft has he sat like genius of the song,
And dream'd of early Greece, the long, long day,
Till, in her woe, his clouded soul grew gay
Beneath those visions which, on memory's track,
Brought the far glories of his country back,
Shining in mournful beauty through the gloom
Of faded years, like stars above a tomb ;
And, though a mockery, as they pass'd him by,
They raised a deathless spirit in his eye,
Which said, *he* lack'd the time, but not the soul,
To add a name to freedom's brightest roll.
And when the moon, like spirit in her flight,
Stole through the opening portals of the night,
While the calm sky look'd dreaming round each star,
And the wild breeze came singing from afar ;
Like freedom's genius, he has sat alone
On the grey cliffs that look on Marathon,
Until his spirit, dizzy with the past,
Forgot the chains, around his country cast,
And rising proudly in the solitude,
Felt, though the world was fetter'd, unsubdued ;
Clenching, in stern delight, his bony hand,
As if he whirl'd in fight his father's brand ;

His long hair streaming on the gale—his eye
Fix'd on the vast interminable sky,
While o'er the desert rose his burning prayer,
And his parch'd lips drank in the mountain air !
These were the glorious moments when he felt
He was a son of Greece, and had not knelt
To her invaders—and he smiled to think,
While standing on the precipice's brink,
And gazing on the beautiful blue sea,
That Greece still lived, while one wild heart was free—
One burning heart, that trembled not to spill
Its last red tear for her deliverance still !

V.

No shrine was his by wealth and flattery won,
He knelt and worshipp'd as his sires had done ;
His God was traced along the earth and sky,
Whose voice was heard when roll'd the thunder by ;
His altar was the lone and mighty Alp,
With zone of clouds, and grey and icy scalp,
Round which the lightnings on their jagged way,
Loved in their solitary strength to play.
When storms departed, and the laughing flowers
Were waked from darkness by the blue-eyed hours,

With his stern comrades he would seek the wild,
And worship God like nature's untaught child ;
His church the glorious sky with all its stars,
The frozen mountains, with their thousand spars
Of glittering ice, the polish'd shafts that stood
Propping the dome of the fair solitude,
Whose music was the tempest in its flight,
Or the blue ocean, in the deep midnight,
Raising his watery harpstrings to the blast,
That brush'd the cords in grandeur as it pass'd.
He sway'd his roving multitudes at will,
As tempests turn the pine-trees on the hill.
Like him, his tribe were outcasts from their land,
Who felt, and gave no mercy, but the brand !
From all their ties, and young affections riven,
They had no love, but vengeance, under heaven.
No wealth was theirs,—but what the falchion's spell
Won from their lords—and they did wield it well :
To them the strife was nothing—'twas a game
Which, lost or gain'd, had still its sweets for them ;—
If gain'd, the spoil repaid the toils of fight—
If lost, revenge could make even slavery light :
The triumph or the rout could give no sting,
And death would only spread the spirit's wing

For happier shores, where they would never trace
The hated steps of Othman's serpent race.

VI.

What means young Zariff now upon the main
With sheathless brand,—and all his savage train?
Ah! need the tale be told?—that dream of bliss,
Which fires the gentlest heart, had kindled his.
Love rear'd for him his sweetest passion flower,
And he did pluck it in a cloudless hour.
She was a beauteous bud, whose magic wile
Could bind the soul in fetters with a smile;—
She was a sunbeam in his morn of life—
But hope forsook him in his day of strife;
And he had seen his dear delusions fall—
His love a captive in the despot's hall!

VII.

Yet Isidora fondly thinks on thee,
Thou fearless rover of the mighty sea!
Think'st thou she can forget her last—her first,
Fond flame of love, which she for thee has nurs'd?
As soon the mother may forget the child,
That, cherub-like, upon her bosom smil'd,

Than she from memory's tablet will erase
The fairy dreams, the hopes of other days !,
Think'st thou she can forget thee ? memory's spell
Will conjure back affection's last farewell ;
She'll feel again each passion and each pain,
That whirling fever of the heart and brain,
Whose balm lies hid in solitude—that thrill,
Whose sway forbids the bosom to be still ;
And she will pine—and weep—when none can see
The burning tear-drops that are shed for thee.
Ay, she will cherish—when all others fade—
A passion which despair itself will aid.

VIII.

The day's last glory tinged the galley's shrouds,
And far away, among the dreaming clouds,
The sparkling stars were gathering one by one,
Like seraphs gazing on the dying sun :
The earth was melting mid the waves of night,
And the cold moon was trembling into light ;
As Zariff reach'd those towers, where mercy slept,
And where his Bird of Beauty pined and wept.
Ranged with his swarthy heroes in the bay,
The chief impatient chides the twilight grey,

That lingers long upon the deep afar—
Oh, that a storm would veil each rising star !
Oh, for the yell of death—the shout of war !
And for that happy hour—when he shall feel
The despot's panting bosom 'neath his steel !

IX.

High on a 'savage crag, whose yawning gorge,
Like stony network, caught the flashing surge
Of the wild sea, a temple stood sublime
In the dark twilight of descending time ;
The rank weeds, twining on its arches grey,
Wove the blue air to midnight in their play :
It stood alone, as if to show the trace
Of freedom's footsteps in that desert place :
The ivy veil'd each marble battlement,
The grey-wolf look'd, like murder, from each rent ;
The bats their misty dance in silence kept,
Like time's old shadow the dim owlet slept ;
The wandering night fox made its groves her lair,
The crawling adder hiss'd in darkness there ;
Tenants, though alter'd, yet the tenants still,
For Time can people deserts at his will ;
'Tis but a change—for man and beauty's face,
Another sect—yet still a breathing race.

Fair in its night of years the temple shone,
A shadow on creation's dial stone,
That mov'd not with the wandering hours, but stood
The same through man and earth's vicissitude,
Lonely and vast ;—the streamers of the night
Fell on the marble in a shower of light,
And one might see the pale stars shining through
The dusky rents, like spirits in the blue
Of heaven's unruffled deep, while, 'mid the dark,
Lone as the raven wandering from the ark,
Some solitary vulture wildly loud
Hung shrieking o'er the ruins from her cloud.
Dome of the perish'd !—thou dost sternly say,
That, like our fathers, we must pass away ;
Ten thousand sun-sets have gone down o'er thee,
And nights unknown, with their eternity,
Have gather'd round thy beauty—they're away,
The only mighty change is thou art grey.
The fresh undying stars have climb'd, and shone,
And still will shine above thy brow of stone ;
Thou and the world, though storms have o'er thee roll'd,
Art still the same, although a little old ;
While nations drop around thee one by one,
And men by millions, when their travel 's done,
Like wandering clouds that vanish 'neath the sun.

X.

“Now moor the galley to this altar’s side !

Unsheathe your blades,”—the chieftain softly cried,

“We’ll use them well ere ended is the fight,

And stain them deeply ere to-morrow’s light.

Oh ! we will pay them back each ancient wrong,

Revenge shall make the weakest spirit strong.

Ay, many a turban shall be chang’d from white—

The emir thinks not of our game to-night ;

But we will wake him from his love-lit dreams—

Torches can fire—and women have their screams !

His gilded domes, that glitter from afar,

May mock ere long the radiance of each star ;

The sternest slave shall sink beneath the sword,

And guards are not for ever round their lord.

Oh ! we will deal his treasures gallantly,

When on the bosom of the freshening sea !

Bear up the arm, till every spear be gilt,

And every falchion, to the very hilt.

His be the greatest prize, when all is o’er,

Who shows his sabre deepest dyed in gore.

My rosy bride shall close each glorious scar,

And lull us into sleep with her guitar !”

XI.

He ceased—each rover of the ocean stood,
And shook on high his naked arm of blood,
Growl'd forth a low wild murmuring sound of death,
Like lion when the foe is on his path.
'Twas but a struggle—and their arms would gain
Wealth fit to heal each sorrow and each pain ;
Their hearts were dauntless, and their swords were keen,
'Tis not the first time they have crimson'd been.
Oh ! for one hour to tame the emir's pride,
Then for a life of pleasure on the tide ;
Each dreaming out a long calm day of rest
On the soft beauties of his captive's breast !

XII.

But lo ! what means that light, at this calm hour,
Within the lattice of the emir's tower,
That streams in rainbow tints along the brow
Of the dark sky, so bright, so wildly now ?
All are not sleeping—Zariff, thou must brave
The swords of many, ere thine arm can save
Thy lovely mourner—she may wait for thee,
But ah ! thy eagle smile may never see.

And when she bends around her weeping eye,
She'll only mark her foemen frowning nigh :
Young hope may lead her gaze across the deep,
And banish from her heart the wing of sleep ;
But vainly now her long white turban flies,
Like love's fair banner through the darken'd skies ;
In vain she waves it with her arm of snow—
Thou canst not see the signal from below,
Else vain were all the despot's boasted power
To keep thee from her in so bless'd an hour.
She long has linger'd for thee—but in vain
Her dim eye wander'd o'er the restless main ;
She knows thy valour, and expecting waits,
But there are brands to meet thee at the gates—
Ay, desperate hearts, and swords to flash as bright
Round Alla's banners, as by thine to-night.

XIII.

“Curse on his tardy gait, and coward soul !”
The chief exclaim'd—“let's onward to the goal !
Perchance he has betray'd us, yet 'tis strange
He should forego his wrongs and his revenge.
Ha, no !—he comes—our comrade still is brave ;
Thou'rt welcome, brother !” cried the chief, and gave

His dark hand to the stranger—"thou shalt be,
Ere many hours, upon thy native sea ;
To pay thy wrongs our blades will not be slack,
If freedom's arm can e'er repay them back.
But wherefore sad, my Selim ?—Are we known ?
Well ! we have swords !—we will not die alone.
No ! trust me, man, the Ottoman shall feel
The wild embrace of Greeks'—and freedom's steel !"
Selim replied—"No, Zariff, we will stand,
And grapple danger nobly hand to hand.
Yet all our plans are marr'd ; the emir's pride,
Fired by the beauty of thy youthful bride,
Commands the marriage shrine to kindle bright ;
The guests are come—this is his wedding night !
A thousand torches light the gaudy room,
The wood of India yields its sweet perfume ;
The slaves are smiling, and the nymphs are gay—
All but thy love, whose mind seems far away ;
In vain the music speaks, the banners wave,
She looks like spirit of the lonesome grave ;
She walks amid the dusky groups, though bright,
Yet like the moon amid a storm at night,
Smiling in mournful beauty, till some cloud
Swathes her fair bosom in its rayless shroud."

XIV.

Oh! had you seen the lover, as he drank
Those words like poison in,—the spirit sank
A moment in his wild eye—as he stood,
As stands a sleeping tempest on the flood,
Cloudy, and deep, and dark, but full of wrath,
Which mutters woe unto the world beneath.
He gazed upon the sky which, high above,
Hung o'er him with its thousand eyes of love ;
Then look'd he on the emir's towers again,
As views the lion the abodes of men,
Shaking his dreadful mane, with savage eye,
Before he springs to triumph or to die.
The chance was cast—he now had cross'd the main,
True swords were round him and his native train ;
And many a wave between him and his home
Heaved to the sky its breast of snowy foam ;
His all was centred in this little hour,
He falls or wins the emir's boasted tower !
He saw the torches flashing through the night,
He heard the revel in the castle's height ;
He clench'd his teeth, and, with a desperate hand,
Whirl'd with a fiendish laugh his naked brand

“ Oh, let him spread the board, and fill the cup—
More than his wedding guests to-night shall sup !
Ay, he shall wed her—oh 'tis well,” he cried,
“ I'll be the Bride's-man by the emir's side,
And gloomy Death shall be the dervise now,
To twine the bridal garland round his brow !
Yes, he, forsooth, must have a carnival,
But Death shall lead the dancers through the hall,
Havoc shall yell his groans, and curses drear,
Instead of harpstrings to the ravish'd ear.
We still have hopes that are not wholly reft—
And see, my Selim,—see our swords are left !
We'll boldly meet the tyrant and his band—
Oh ! for our last fond welcome hand to hand !
Oh ! for the moment when our blades are met.
On, on and face them—hope at last may set,
But her bright star that led us o'er the flood,
Will only vanish in a storm of blood !
On for the hour of havoc !” “ Stay, oh, stay !”
Selim exclaim'd—“ such valour will betray
Her bravest heroes, by a deed that's wrought
In the first whirlwind of the maddening thought.
Say, whither would you lead your scanty power—
In what weak point attack the emir's tower ?

For every sword you bring against his wall,
A thousand soon will glitter at his call;
Tyrants, though hated, still find slaves to draw
Their heartless brands to shield despotic law.
Thy sea-born warriors now may dimly eye
The snow-white turbans 'neath the star-lit sky,
And glittering blades, which pass along the brow
Of yon rude battlements by thousands now.
But, list!—I have a plan to suit the night:
The moon goes down ere ended is the rite:—
The grave bird shrieks—list!—over the far flood;
Does that not prophesy a tale of blood?
Ay,—ay,—it shall be done—but to my plot:
'Mid wine and love the emir has forgot
To mount a guard so strong, whose swords may keep
His sprightly rival from a certain steep
Where stands his bridal chamber; thou shalt see
Anon the spot of love and liberty.
In truth, his bands are more equipp'd to-night
To grace his carnival than join in fight.
Ere long the priest will lead the merry pair
Before the shrine—but thou too shalt be there.
I've gain'd the holy man—he hates the creed
Of the red Infidel, and wills the deed.

Come, bring thy tribe around the castle wall,
There let them lurk,—until they hear our call;
Then let them fire the faggots and ascend,
Each shall but find the welcome of a friend.
Thyself must deck thee in our Turkish dress :
Come, come, 'twill make thy manhood nothing less :
And I will lead thee to the altar's side—
Thou know'st the rest—death, vengeance, and thy bride!"

XV.

The guide is silent: with a deadly smile,
The chief grinn'd out a horrid laugh the while,
As with his sword and eye, that echo'd on—
He sternly pointed where the castle shone ;
Then ranged his band for conquest or for death.
Now nought is heard—no murmur—but their breath,
Which, like the first low muttering of the storm,
Porclains the havoc it may soon perform.
They gasp one prayer—and then with dreadful look
The last mute welcome of each other took,
Silent and savage, like the vulture flock
Descending from their eyries in the rock,
Leagued in one mass, upon the battle plain,
Where writhe the wounded, and where rot the slain,

'Neath winds that shed contagion with their breath,
And suns that blister the cold brow of death.

XVI.

Oh ! who can tell the feelings dark and strong,
Which nerve those bosoms which have suffer'd wrong ?
That burning throb—the passion of revenge,
Which, though it slumbers long, can never change ;
Those wild, those withering thoughts, that darkly roll,
Like lava tide athwart the raving soul ?
Oh ! had you seen these warriors in the shade,
Silent and stern, each with his naked blade !
Their faces were like marble, where the pain—
The pride of hate starts darkly in each vein ;
And though death yell'd not in their stifled cry,
He looked in silence from each wolfish eye.

XVII.

The moon was now within a cloudy porch
Of night's old palace ;—'neath her darken'd torch
Moved in their sullenness that gaunt array—
The hungry raven met them on their way,
Flapping his wings in the black solitude,
As if he snuff'd afar the scent of blood.

Their gloomy stillness suited not the din,
The long wild roar of mirth, that swell'd within.
Ranged round the turrets, in their lair they lie,
Like the hid tiger when the prey is nigh;
And Zariff bids a moment's wild farewell—
A little moment—till they heard his yell;
Then each with falchion was to greet a guest
Within the palace hall—they knew the rest.
They breathed assent,—while he, with hasty foot,
Pass'd the long draw-bridge, sullenly and mute.
He reach'd the hall—he stood where all were gay,
As stands a black cloud in some sunny day,
Rearing before the sun its dusky form,
The first dark herald of the gathering storm.
Now Vengeance lights her torch of fiercest blaze,
While Mercy sickens 'neath the demon's gaze;
Even Fancy bends a wild and weeping eye,
And inly shudders at the carnage nigh.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

MEANWHILE the glories of the feast arise,
And pleasure sparkles in a thousand eyes ;
The mutes are smiling, and the slaves are free,
For one short night of joyous revelry.
The dark-eyed captives of the haram bower,
With laughing faces, try to suit the hour ;
But though their cheek is dimpled with a smile,
A burning tear-drop dims their eyes the while.
Fond memory clouds each brow a moment glad,
They think of home, and 'mid the mirth are sad ;
They fondly dream of those delightful hours,
When life's young pathway only lay through flowers ;

Like summer sunshine in a desert spot,
Memory reveal'd each fair forget me not,
Which still the spirit's eye saw dimly wave,
The last fond wrecks on virtue's early grave.

II.

Yet though some pine in secret, all seem bright,
Or those who sorrow hide their griefs to-night ;
They must not come to mar this eve of peace,
Or soon the emir's sword will make them cease ;
When he has deign'd his gloomy brow to smoothe,
All must look rosy as the lip of youth :
No sighs to-night—no, nothing but the tone
Of sparkling love—he shall be king alone :
His thousand eyes shall on the banquet beam
The fittest lights to warm time's wintry stream ;
The stars of night may gather if they will,
The emir's palace will have brighter still.

III.

High gleam the lamps within their chains of gold,
And wine has made the weakest spirit bold ;
A thousand harps ring out their swelling notes ;
Far through the womb of eve the music floats,

As if the sound held converse in the night
With nature's spirit, 'neath the calm moonlight.
And he of saintly garb, who lowers apart,
As if in weary loneliness of heart—
Of all the train, why is his swarthy brow
And eagle eye alone in blackness now?
Ah!—you that stand around him, had you known
His dreadful message, fear had turn'd to stone
The boldest heart, and blanch'd the ripest lips,
The wine had stood untasted in the cups.

IV.

The dervise garb befits young Zariff well,
And scarcely could his kin their chieftain tell;
All eyes might miss him now, for all are dim
Compared to Love's—and they are wet for him.
Ha! see he starts—the portals open wide—
The emir enters and his gentle bride.
A thousand heads, in lowliness profound,
Are bent like drooping willows to the ground.
The chieftain gather'd up his dusky form,
And stood as stands an eagle in the storm,
With moveless pinions floating on the sky,
Measuring his victim with devouring eye.

V.

But, no ! it cannot be ! she was more fair
When last they breathed affection's holy prayer ;
Her eye was brighter, and her cheek less pale—
The change may tell thee many a dreadful tale.
She, like the dove, thrown from her favourite ark,
Sees nothing but creation waste and dark ;
She follows thee with fancy's eye in vain,
But like the raven finds thee not again.

VI.

The slaves, like sea-birds, in a shining cloud,
Wheel through the hall,—amid that happy crowd
Comes Isidora, mournful as the bier,
And she had sunk, had not a pillar near
Rear'd its tall shaft, on which she rested now
A moment, in despair, her feverish brow ;
Her look was vacant, as the stars that eye
From the cold sea their sisters in the sky.
She stood like statue rooted to the stone,
As if the glare and crowd that round her shone—
As if all chance and change were now forgot
Within the desert of her darkening thought.

She seem'd exempt from pleasure and from strife,
Like something cut in marble without life.
And ill the veil her faded forehead screens,
The granite heap o'er which she sighs and leans
Looks not more lifeless, while each sable tress
Floats o'er her breast in utter carelessness.
But now two female slaves on tip-toe glide,
Approach,—and lead her to the emir's side ;
Her sandal'd feet fall on the floor as light
As moon-beams on the ocean and as white.

VII.

Close curly hair of deep and raven dye,
Twined round a wrinkled forehead pale and high,
That look'd like marble by some shadow hid,
And scarcely tinted with a lifeless red ;
Dark was his eye beneath a shaggy lash,
His whiskers dark,—and darker his mustache ;
Scorn in his glance her arrows seem'd to dip,
And doubt and pride sat on his ashy lip ;
Such was the emir, as his gentle bride
Droop'd in her silent sorrow by his side.
'Twas well she gazed not round—a shriek had told
Each turban'd slave the muffled dervise bold :

And he, her warrior, saw the bridal throng
Pass through the hall amid the voice of song ;
He saw a well-known shape—a well-known word
Broke on his ear—no other sound he heard ;
A sickening mist a moment dimm'd his eye,
He saw a form, like sunburst, pass him by ;
He saw a vision, and a gentle face
Leaning in woe upon a pillar's base ;
And he remembers—'tis a misty dream,
But yet his eye can ne'er forget the beam
Of the young living face, that now appears
So like the star that lit his earlier years ;
He deems the whole a trance of fond despair,
He looks again—she still is drooping there.
Oh, yes ! he knows her well—with desperate hand
He sternly grasps unseen his sheathless brand,
Scarce could his bursting soul restrain her wing
To clasp his love ; he stood prepared to spring,
When, ah ! the two bright captives came, and he
Was left again in gloomy revery.

VIII.

By this the revelry was at its height,
And life unfetter'd look'd one moment bright ;

So fair the eyes—so sweet the music now,
That even a smile lit up the emir's brow.
To Isidora pleasure's voice was vain,
The sparkling jest, the harp's enlivening strain,
Pass'd far away, and holier music stole
From memory's magic cords across her soul.
Her thoughts are wandering on another shore,
The sunshine of the past is darted o'er ;
Those heavenly scenes of youth, which still are seen
Amid the waste of memory, calm and green,
And though her eye through sorrow's mist appears,
It looks the lovelier in its bed of tears,
Like summer rainbows—that will only rise
The brightest cradled in the weeping skies :
The present flutter of her bosom threw
Her sleeping charms more freshly to the view,
Like the rude breeze that ruffles o'er the flower,
Though it may break it in an evil hour,
Yet spreads its lustre with its pinions chill,
And makes its dying hour its sweetest still.

IX.

There was a lay—the emir loved it well,
Though tinged with freedom ere her children fell,

An old rude melody, which had its birth
In the fresh spring-time of the infant earth ;
A lay which liberty had made sublime,
Warm with the feelings of the sunny clime
Of beauteous Greece, when she, upon the waters,
Sat like a goddess 'mid her sea-green daughters.
It was a simple song ; and freemen still
Might chant it on the desert heath at will ;
The emir loved it, and a Grecian youth
Could touch the harp, and even the despot soothe.
The tyrant gave the signal, with a look :
Which told delay his spirit ill could brook ;
The captive caught it with a trembling smile,
Tuned the low cords into a note the while ;
As expectation round the banquet ran
He struck the strings,—and with a sigh began :

SONG. .

“ Come to the desert, lovely one,
Our tribes shall guard thee on thy way,
And long before the rising sun,
We'll rest upon the mountains grey ;
There will we sleep, beneath the tree,
The beauteous palm that waves above,
And nothing but the brave and free
Shall guard the hunter and his love.

" The flowers that woo the desert air
Shall gem alone thy guileless breast
The only plumage for thy hair
Shall be the eagle's dusky crest.
We'll journey to those wastes sublime
Where freedom her pavilion rears,
Where rosy love, instead of time,
Tells out our long and happy years."

Thus 'mid his bands of freeborn men,
Thus sang my love, nor thought to part ;
For oh ! no chains were woven then
To bind the hand and break the heart.
Now is my warrior far away,
And I, beside the summer deep,
May sit, and mourn our hope's decay—
He cannot see me when I weep.

X.

As onward roll'd the music of the song,
The warrior stood amid the festive throng,
Bit his pale lip, until the dark blood burst—
In vain his soul her gathering passion nursed.
All eyes might have beheld, had they but known,
The one whose look, like mustering thunder, shone,

Sullen, and black, and savage, as the light
Heralding an earthquake in the dead of night.
His lov'd one heeded not, but sat with face
Bent on the blue serenity of space,
That broke around the revellers cold and pale,
And oft she sigh'd while listening to the gale—
The fresh sweet breeze of night, that seem'd to be
Abroad, to mock her with its liberty ;
And many a gem, too brilliant for despair,
Flash'd from the dark waves of her braided hair,
And the wild wreath of flowers around her brow
Seem'd on its chilliness in mockery now ;
The mournful music breathing from her eye,
Told that she wish'd death's icy farewell nigh ;
Her lips were parted, and her rosy mouth,
Through which the sweetest language of the south,
Like song, had flow'd, were curved without a groan,
And wore that look, which Guido's hand has thrown,
With all the poet, all the painter's fires,
Around his Magdalene, as she expires—
That dreaming agony—that thrill of pain—
That trance of feeling—and that mist of brain—
That languid dizziness of soul and eye,
Which speaks a broken heart, and darkness nigh.

XI.

A moment's pause—oppress'd with love and wine,
The emir rises for the marriage shrine.
Ay, Zariff, hold thy sabre sheathless now,
But hide that cloud which gathers on thy brow ;
Apply thy whistle—sound it far and well,
Thy band will answer nobly to the yell ;
Each in his lair waits silent for thy foes,
Like death above two armies ere they close.
The despot grasps her hand—a tear has slid,
Big, bright, and burning from her ivory lid ;
A flush hath pass'd her forehead, like the ray
Of moonshine gathering cold and far away ;
She heeded not the emir's glance, but turn'd
Where, in their beauty, eve's high watchers burn'd,
Their dim blue lustre showering down through space
Fell through the wide saloon upon her face,
Tinging its marble whiteness as she bent
Like pity weeping o'er some monument.

XII.

And when he saw his smile had not the charm
To call up hers as brilliantly and warm,

Her gentle form he dark and sternly scann'd,
Bit his curl'd lip, and clench'd his bony hand,
Leering—and in his leer the air of death,
With temples flush'd, fix'd eye, and hollow breath,
Short as the whelpless tigress when she eyes
Beneath her fangs the bleeding foe—he tries
To curse, but passion chok'd the venom'd draught,
Hyena like, he only stood and laugh'd,
Savage, and hoarse, and panting, while the beam
Of his red eye lowers on her, like the gleam
Of the dark tempest, whose unscabbard light
Plays round some statue, ere its falchion smite
With levelling edge, the heaven devoted bust
Showering the shiver'd marble in the dust;
While she before his frown of darkness bow'd,
Pale as the moon that fronts some stormy cloud.
“By God's great prophet, thou shalt feel the power
Of him thou scorn'st upon his bridal hour!
This bosom was not made for thy disdain—
Here, shrinking minion, this will end thy pain!”
He cried, and whirled his shining blade on high,
Nought echo'd through the palace but a sigh—
A long low sigh—a shudder—and a groan,
That might have turn'd the boldest heart to stone,

A hollow groan—a murmur from the floor—
One transient struggle—and the whole was o'er !
But there arose one wild unearthly yell,
Far louder than the scream of her who fell—
A wild and savage shout—a glance—and then
The sabre's sparkle, and the fall of men !
The whistle 's blown—its echoes answer shrill,
His band are rushing desperate up the hill ;
They clear the hall like tempest, when it sweeps
The heavy corn, and lays its trembling heaps.
The shout of death the reeling concave fills,
Like thunder breaking on a thousand hills.
While Zariff springs upon his savage foe,
With giant arm he hew'd the despot low,
Whose shelly eyeball moveless as he reel'd
With hue of ice his latest wish reveal'd.
Revenge—one blow at parting—one wild grasp,
More firm than friendship's—but his husky gasp
Makes the wish vain—he heaves his latest pang,
While o'er the bleeding trunk the warrior sprang,
To join his band, who, faithful to his call,
Stood, the dark victors of the banquet hall,
With red arms bared, and turbans deeply gilt,
And falchions clotted to the very hilt.

The guests stand mute in horror, like the crew
Of some storm-shatter'd galley, when in view
Rolls the last thunder of the mountain wave
They know must shroud them in its darksome grave ;
Each eye is bent upon its yawning brink,
They shrink—they waver not—but with it sink :
So stood the astonished throng, and only reel
Beneath the stern sweep of the victor's steel,
Like the despairing thousands of a town,
When earthquake treads her marble columns down.

XIII.

Now are the harpstrings mute—the goblets shine
Full to the brim, but who shall drink the wine?
The revellers sleep with dim and blood-shot eyes,
Starting in death, and gazing on the skies
That dully break in that deserted place,
And stream in mockery o'er each faded face.
Some on the marble pavement coldly lay
With blades half-drawn, as if to meet the fray ;
Others with stretch'd-out arm, and lip of wrath,
As if they long'd to strike one blow ere death.
Revenge is writ on every sallow brow,
Stamp'd by the sword—it cannot alter now.

XIV.

The dome is silent all, save where the yell
Of the far flying wretches feebly swell
Along the night sky, and makes music drear
To the cold freezing stillness reigning here.
Still lingers one—the only thing with life,
O'er which hath swept the hurricane of strife.
Though deep the gash that yawns upon her brow,
Her gentle heart is beating still—and now
Behold ! that chieftain, maddening in his woe,
With sabre dripping from the slaughter'd foe,
Moving among the sleepers, pale and mute,
With eye of horror, and with hurried foot ;
On every female brow that meets his sight,
Wan as the marble in the green moon-light,
He bends his glance, and throws the clotted hair
Back from his forehead, and with stony glare
Follows the lines of every faded cheek,
So wildly beautiful in life's last streak,
Then with a groan darts hurriedly away,
To pause above another heap of clay.

XV.

But, ha ! his eye has singled from the throng
The one his spirit panted for so long !
As o'er her form he bent, he groan'd—he shook,
As the worn willow o'er its kindred brook.
She lives ! she lives ! the tyrant's blow was vain
Amid this night of death—she's his again !
And Isidora,—though her heart was chill,
Heard a mild mournful voice remember'd still.
Awaking slowly from her dizzy trance,
She bent on him a fond, a maddening glance,
And raised her large dark eye, as pure and bright
As moonshine flashing through a storm at night ;
Her heavy orb now oped, and lovelier grew,
While he, the sunbeam of her spirit, flew
Again to her cold arms, which feebly press'd
Her long lost warrior to her bleeding breast.
Above the beautiful, he fondly hung
Like eagle cowering o'er his dying young.
Ah ! life is struggling in her heaving breath,
And on her forehead is the chill of death—
That awful shadow, which the grave bestows
On the cold face, ere life's last glimmer close.

Yet she is happy in her latest hour—
She has again her spirit's brightest dower !
A moment past, she thought she must depart
In weary, hopeless loneliness of heart,
Without one eye to shed a tear o'er her,
Without one sigh above her sepulchre :
Oh ! now in joy, her soul its bonds can burst
On the warm breast of her affection's first !
Heaven now repays her for her nights of gloom,
By this last sun-burst darted o'er her tomb :
Though life was bitter, fortune has let fall
One drop of honey in its tide of gall !
But ah ! hope dawns like an unfriendly hour
In which, from leafy sleep, some gentle flower,
Woo'd by the early smile of treacherous skies,
Starts, buds, expands, then languishes, and dies.

XVI.

Haste, warrior of the wild ! and reach the main—
Thy band are struggling with the foe in vain ;
Thousands on thousands rush to the alarms,
Drawn by the blazing towers and clashing arms,
And hem them round—yet 'mid the fearful fray
They nobly combat, and make good their way ;

Now free—now shrouded in the gathering fight,
Like wintry stars among the clouds of night ;
Now lost—now breaking to thy straining view,
They battle on to reach the waters blue.
Each sabre's clash tells to thy listening ear
That giant Death is now approaching near.
The charge—the tug—the grapple—and the yell,
In mingled din, throughout the palace swell !
Thy stately galley waits for thine and thee—
Oh ! haste and reach thy empire of the sea ;
Freedom and life is on the freshening deep,
Chains on the shore, and death's eternal sleep !

XVII.

Zariff beheld his native band approach—
They needed now no aid from lamp or torch ;
The blazing turrets show'd the fearful track,
Which they had yet to measure nobly back—
Show'd him the turbans of the gathering foe,
Line over line like drifts of wintry snow ;
While high above, the sabre's flashing bars
Shone o'er their surface like a thousand stars.
He only gave his band one cheering look,
His glittering blade again he grimly shook,

And eyed his foemen with a stony glare,
Then like the awful spirit of despair,
He swung his virgin to his manly breast,
And stood conspicuous by his eagle crest,
Against the thousands, that were rushing on ;
Their only trump—death's solitary groan.
High is the heart, and strong the red right hand,
That now for Isidora waves the brand,
That cuts a passage to the dark blue sea,
Where floats in light their bark of liberty !

XVIII.

Though borne by numbers, each unshrinking hand
Is glued like marble to the dripping brand ;
Nought but the gasp of their suspended breath
Breaks the stern hush'd magnificence of death ;
While in the grappling fight each frenzied soul
Strikes deep and deadly at its parting goal.
One glorious effort !—they have gain'd the tide,
Still they must battle bravely by its side.
Now all have reach'd the sheltering bark, but those
Who need no aid from friends, nor wound from foes.
Stretch'd 'neath a host, in slaughter redly pent,
Buried they lie in that wild monument ;

Shrouded in death, they cannot hear your call—
Away!—their swords have well revenged their fall!
Away!—the fresh gale of the bounding main
Sings in your ears fair freedom's hymn again!
The sea-birds are your playmates—and the breeze
Your old companion on the mighty seas!
No tyrant's sword can chase you o'er the wave,
The deep is not a palace for the slave!
Hold to your oars! far distant is your home,
But there are eyes to hail you when you come!
See, morn begins to lace his doublet grey,
And sweep yon host of laughing stars away;
The sun will rise, but find you on the deep,
Far from the hated walls where captives weep;
And though companionless, are ye not still
The children of the desert and the hill—
The sons of nature's mighty solitude,
Pleased with your Mother in her wildest mood?
Then stretch away, though friendless and alone,
That glorious world of waters is your own!

END OF CANTO SECOND.

THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

'Tis morn : the sun in living light has oped
His orient portals, and in glory dropp'd
His golden banner o'er the jocund sky,
To rouse mankind to triumph, weep, or die.
Like a young ocean spirit fair and free,
The bounding galley swept the freshening sea ;
Nought broke the calm, that round the waters spread,
But a long line of vultures o'er their head,
Pouring from the far deserts of the east,
To reach the emir's turrets, where a feast
Was spread for them by Zariff and his host,
Along the black crags of that savage coast,

So mute those prowlers wander'd, and so high,
They made no motion in the waveless sky,
But seem'd like specks, engraven on the blue
Of the wild voiceless region where they flew.

II.

Though fair the breeze that swells the vessel's sail,
Yet on her deck is many a forehead pale,—
The hue of death, or hatred's darker cloud,
The groan of pain, or discontent more loud ;
The thought of captives, lost for ever now,
Flung a deep shade on every swarthy brow ;
This late adventure had come badly off,
And friends at home are ever prone to scoff,
When there's no golden proof—no spoil to shew
The fearful struggle with a vanquish'd foe ;
And though the hour of strife may lull to rest
Those master passions of the savage breast—
Women and gold—yet when the battle's by,
The heart repines, when nothing greets the eye
But wounds, and fallen comrades, and despair,
In many a closing eye's unearthly glare.
So 'mid that war-bark's heroes might be seen,
Brows pale in death or darkly knit in spleen ;

Some pace the deck like plague-struck men, who hear
The cry of dying thousands in their ear ;
And others gazed upon the sea, with look
Which said, this sluggish change they ill could brook ;
Pale lip compress'd, and on each forehead chill
The savage wish to bleed and battle still ;
While others brooded o'er the shatter'd wreck
Of life that writh'd upon the gory deck,
And though they seem'd in thoughtlessness at rest,
Their troubled eye another tale express'd,
Which, like the sleeping tempest on the hill,
Although it thunders not has lightning still.
Linger'd a firmer band around their chief,
Who lost their own within their leader's grief ;
Though most of them were bleeding by his side,
They stood in all the majesty of pride,
Strong in the hour of trial, unsubdued,
As lions in their own wild solitude.

III.

Stretch'd on a war-cloak Isidora lay,
Her spirit passing like a dream away,
Gentle as summer zephyrs, when they die
Upon the bosom of a breezeless sky ;

A moment's hectic cross'd her bloodless cheek,
Like day's last sunbeams playing o'er the peak
Of some far snowy mountain, though they skim
Along the ice, yet, ah ! how cold and dim !
They cannot melt the frozen heap beneath,
But only beautify the frown of death ;
So is that flush—'twas but a transient glare,
The twilight of the grave again is there ;
So calm her last good-night, love seems to steal
The sting from death, that she may only feel
That sleep which comes the broken heart to heal.

IV.

As star-lights start along the midnight main,
Dawn'd life's young visions o'er her darken'd brain ;
Sleep falls like music on her weary soul,
As if to plume it for its darkest goal ;
And but her parted lips, from which the sigh
Struggled into existence, she did lie
Pale as the summer bow's departing ray,
Like little clouds that sometimes rise and stray
Across the dying moon ; her tresses now
Shade the pure alabaster of her brow.
Above her bends her chief, as if to mark
A resting place for hope amid the dark ;

He hears her murmur in her sleep—a tone
Like music in a dream broken and lone :
At first inaudible, then it became
A living sound—he heard her breathe his name,
And one might see her spirit in her sleep
Felt all the pangs of those who part and weep ;
And as he grasp'd her hand, so white and chill,
He saw the pure blood rush—he felt the thrill
That bounded with that pressure to her breast
Which told him that she knew the hand she press'd ;
Awake or slumbering—still unforgot
His image fill'd her memory's greenest spot.

V.

The sky is blue and beautiful—the breeze
Makes love upon the bosom of the seas ;
But soon the gale will fan thy lifeless head—
The narrow house, fair sleeper ! is thy bed.
The sun to-morrow will illumine the wave—
The sun will rise and glitter on thy grave !
The lonely stars, that were on many a night
Companions of thy wanderings, will light
Again their torches at the summer moon,—
But will they grant thee life's frail feverish boon ?

The long night cometh, but it comes to thee
Dark with the shadows of eternity !
She breathes adieu—and setting in the grave,
Dim as the misty moonlight on the wave,
The spirit wanes within her glazing eye—
And, ah ! what scenes—what thoughts of days gone by—
What vanish'd visions of long vanish'd years
Speak in those glassy orbs that set in tears ?
But oh ! the night of death is lone and chill,
And she is nothing—whom he worships still !

VI.

Gone are his pleasures, never to return,
His bosom now is like the hollow urn
That holds the dust of the distinguish'd dead—
There lie hope's ashes, but her soul is fled !
Although his morn of life is scarcely up,
And though its smile has only gilt his cup,
Yet transient beam'd that radiance round his heart,
The night has gather'd and he must depart ;
His brain is dark—its light hath pass'd away,
Gone like the beam that glitter'd yesterday ;
Yes, it is done ! her latest pang is o'er,
What death has struck shall never suffer more.

And has she perish'd?—come, and view that brow,
And death will answer every question now.
His hand has turn'd that gentle heart to stone,
And dragg'd the spirit from its azure throne.
Yet she is beautiful—and on her face
Lingers the shadow of each morning grace,
As if her dust were marble, and love's mould
Is graven on it never to grow old.
She lies, as if her sunk and shrouded eye
Saw through the blue interminable sky,
Her spirit travelling with unblemish'd wing;
'Child of the stars, a bright undying thing.

VII. .

The hardy crew stood gazing on the dead
With silent look of agony and dread.
Death they had often seen, but ne'er before
To them his look such awful beauty wore:
Though in the battle with the dripping brand,
They oft had shook the spectre hand to hand,
They never paused till now to mark his streak,
Frozen so deeply on so fair a cheek;
Their deeds were in confusion wildly wrought,
Which gave no moment for the eye of thought,

To scan the awful picture of the fray ;
But now they saw him sit above his prey ;
And as the pinions of the wandering gale
Moved the dark ringlets on her forehead pale,
And the deep shadows of the ocean threw
Athwart her face a more unearthly hue,
The mournful vision struck their souls with fear,
And superstition lent its aid to sear
Their stormy spirits, as with pious care
They wreathed the long rich tresses of her hair
With the green sea-weed drifting on the tide,
Fit ornament for valour's spotless bride.

. VIII.

The sea-flowers, leaping through the living spray,
Told there was land not many leagues away,—
Perchance a spot to make a lonely grave
Upon the hem of the eternal wave—
A tomb whose canopy would be the clouds,
Whose watchers the pale star-lights in their shrouds,
Where the grey eagle of the hill might chant,
And the fresh breeze, the deep's inhabitant,
Sing o'er her dust a requiem sweetly wild,
Dear to the soul of freedom's loveliest child.

IX.

While thus his comrades gazed upon the dead,
While thus in woe they plann'd her lowly bed,
The chieftain sat, as if he still could trace
Her spirit hovering o'er her cold white face ;
The red sky gleam'd above him, and the main
Threw up its laughing crimson waves in vain ;
The war-bark bounded on—he heeded not,
But sat a statue in the trance of thought,
Gazing intensely on her marble brow,
As if he felt in his affliction now
A hope, that, while her ashes met his eye,
The soul that warm'd them would be hovering nigh.
Ay, weep, fond mourner ! but thy tears are vain—
They cannot cool the fever at thy brain—
That longing of the soul, which, though she knows
Is vain, yet memory's eyelids will not close.
Thine is the worst of fates, for thou canst see
The dreadful truth, the dark reality,
Where no bright dream of fancy dare invest
With hope's enchantment the forsaken breast.
In sorrow's hour, the warm and manly heart,
Although it sinks not, owns affliction's dart,

While colder, coward souls unmoved can keep
Those tears which nature never bade them weep.
Yes, Zariff felt his manliness subdued,
Nor blush'd at last to own the melting mood ;
He fondly thought on many a vanish'd bliss,
Departed pleasures, now no longer his ;
Those scenes that blossom 'mid affliction's strife,
But steal unheeded through the calm of life ;
Those little traits of love that haunt the mind,
Like sunshine visiting in sleep the blind,
Calm and delightful, such a heavenly beam
As will not vanish with the fading dream,
But haunt the soul for ever, and remain
A living spot within the wither'd brain.

X.

The sun look'd on them in its wrath, like God
When gazing on the world beneath the load
Of the wild flood—while in the east afar
The moon came rolling, with one stormy star
Over the muttering sea—a wanderer,
Like mercy gazing on a sepulchre.
The sunny veil, that hung o'er nature's brow,
Begins to flutter on her forehead now ;

The waters, rolling howlingly and fast,
Are split before the red share of the blast ;
The storm begins to blow—his gusty squalls
And the dark shadow of his coming falls
Around their galley—those who know the birth
Of tempests, see one gathering o'er the earth ;
No passing cloud, but one eternal pall
Of pitchy gloom, that seems to mantle all.
The band of Zariff, who, like wild birds, keep
Their path in darkness o'er the whirling deep,
The blast their playmate, and the bark their home,
Ocean their pillow, and the sky their dome ;
Bred on the sea, and nursed where tempests dwell,
Know the wild wayward mood of nature well.
And now they had a moment's cause to dread—
The mustering hurricane swung o'er their head,
And the sharp wind the whistling waters lash'd ;
And in each face the spray in torrents dash'd ;
Sullen they stood, as on their galley swung,
And through their cordage the wild breezes sung,
Like wailing spirits in the murky blast,
Shrieking their death-note as they hurry past.
Each look is fix'd in that devoted bark
On the far clouds that gather deep and dark,

As if to read the language of the sky,
The only book familiar to their eye,
Type of the world before them spread the waves,
One boundless universe of storms and graves.
High sweeps the war-bark o'er the breaking surge,
Wide yawn the deeps around her—and they urge
Her straining hulk along the flashing spray,
Light as the leaf the tempest sweeps away.
The waves have swathed her in their snowy shrouds :
Now stands the red moon 'mid the rushing clouds,
Like death in the far solitude of space,
Looking in darkness on the human race.
The hissing flood the shivering galley wrapp'd,
While, through the dark, the storm's red spirit clapp'd
His swarthy hands, and, shouting long and loud,
Lash'd his black chargers o'er the thunder cloud !

XI.

In vain the shatter'd galley stagger'd on ;
Her mast was rent—her sails and rudder gone ;
Around her reel'd the sea with shriek of death,
As if an earthquake's spirit flounced beneath ;
The black sky yawn'd, but ocean mock'd its yell,
With his own roar, as wild and terrible ;

The wind ran whistling through his hall—and loud
Wave rose and call'd to wave, and cloud to cloud ;
All was extinguish'd, save when, through the sky,
The fiery-footed lightning hurried by,—
Not like one gleam upon its jagged flight,
But cataract rushing from some mountain's height,
Rousing the ocean spirits as they pass'd,
Who shook their watery tresses to the blast !
The crash of storms—the hiss—the bolt—the glare—
The wave—the wind—swept through the strangled air,
Loud as that thunder which will welcome in
The last dark day upon a world of sin,
When the archangel spreads his wings abroad,
And startles nature with the trump of God !

XII.

The chief beheld the tempest rushing by,
But heeded not the wild voice of the sky ;
He only sigh'd—whene'er the wrathful storm
Curl'd the white garments round a beauteous form,
And gave a moment's life to each long tress,
That slept upon a brow of nothingness.
He sat in sullenness ; and when the spray
Was dash'd upon the face that by him lay,

In silence still he only wiped the streak
Of the cold foam from his pale virgin's cheek,
Wrung the rich ringlets which the blast had spread,
And calmly wreathed them round her gentle head.

XIII.

Now wild and fearful mutterings began,
From lip to lip with lightning speed they ran ;
Each eye is turn'd with strange unearthly fear,
First to the cold face stretch'd upon the bier,
Then to the chief, as if each glance would fain
Dart through the midnight darkness of his brain,
And catch the various thoughts which wander'd there,
And weigh his feelings with their own despair.
Another threatening murmur now has burst—
Another still more fearful than the first ;
And see amid the gloom, darkly and dread,
Each swarthy hand points to the beauteous dead,
With burning lips apart, and gasping breath,
That seem'd suspended in the thirst for death !
“ Yes, yes ! the storm is waked alone for her—
There lies the dust, and here the sepulchre !
For her this tempest swathes us on the deep,
When she is gone—the floods again will sleep.

The spirit of the waters hovers near,
And flaps his pall of clouds above yon bier."
Thus ran the withering cry of wild despair
From lip to lip each brow, each tone, each glare ;
Told the black purpose of the gloomier soul
Writhing 'neath superstition's dark control.

XIV.

Nursed in the depths of mountain solitude,
Where fiercest passions rule alone the blood,
Where all that frenzy dreams of soon finds birth,
And savage virtue is the highest worth ;
His crew, beneath whose grasp each tyrant droops,
Though madly brave, were superstition's dupes ;
A dream—a spell had greater power to crush
Their rugged hearts than havoc's wildest rush,
Where sword meets sword, and death alone extends
The stern embrace alike to foes and friends.
And now they deem'd the storm beset their path,
Because their galley held the form of death ;
In their wild terror they but thought it just,
That dust at last should be consign'd to dust ;
They could not see the thousand nameless ties
Which bind love's relics to a lover's eyes ;

Death they could meet, defiance in their air,
But could not look upon him lying there,
So calm—so cold—oh no ! the waters blue
Must shroud that dreadful vision from their view.

XV.

The storm increases—o'er its yawning track,
The howling tempest walks sublimely black,
Dashing the boiling ocean into mist,
Following each bolt that through the gloom hath hiss'd !
The thunders lift their voices to the sky,
Like chaos shrieking through infinity !
'Twas vain to strive in such an hour of dread—
The sea must be young Isidora's bed ;
When she is gone, the giant waves may sleep—
Then haste and plunge her in the whirling deep !
Why pause when all is horror and despair ?
Ah ! well they mark her warrior standing there,
Like tiger panting o'er his slaughter'd young,
When the first hunter's dart has o'er him sung.
Oh ! there are moments, when the burning heart
Must act ere reason takes a busy part !
The warrior knew the bitterest cup was quaff'd—
He only heard their threats, and madly laugh'd.

His turban stream'd upon the broken storm,
His snowy sash twined round his swarthy arm ;
His dark eye fix'd, his forehead high and bare,
The blast had spread his links of coal-black hair,
Which dangled largely round his awful head,
Like the roused lion when his mane is spread ;
His proud lip curl'd, his gasp like that of death,
Hoarse as the ocean when it yawns to breathe ;
His arm was lifted to the lowering sky,
His teeth were set—his band were standing by,
With looks that told their minds were firmly bent,
And swords prepared to aid their wild intent.

XVI.

Silent and savagely their looks they fix'd,
As if to blast each other ere they mix'd,
Now a dark threat, first spoken by the eye,—
Then murmur'd—echo'd in one stormy cry—
Bursts from a few cold hearts that could not bear
Their chieftain's calmness and their own despair.
A savage threat, if none might them oppose,
To free the ship of dead and living foes ;
But soon that wish is silenced by the look
Of many a faithful eye, that could not brook

Wrong to their chief in hours so dark and chill,
At least by hearts his own—his fearless still.
He heard their threats—but heeded not—his view
Is fix'd upon the waters; and he knew
That ere to-morrow's dawn the troubled deep
May be the mansion where they all would sleep
Beneath the wave in either's arms at peace—
Their strife would vanish and the tempest cease.
Pleased with these thoughts, in heaviness of heart,
He left the dead—and from his crew apart
He spoke not—sigh'd not—but, with brow aghast,
Lean'd in a gloomy trance against the mast.

XVII.

With joy his crew beheld the sunshine now
Stealing a moment o'er his sallow brow;
Yet loath to break his heart, they tried again
To brave the tempest, but it was in vain;
Then turn'd their eyes to him, as if to show
'Twas heaven itself that will'd the fatal blow;
Though mute their lips, their look was darkly deep,
Such as a spirit gives, unused to weep;
Then they approach'd the bier where slept the maid—
None touch'd a gem with which she was array'd;

The diamonds glitter'd in her long black hair ;
The waves will shroud them—they may sparkle there ;
The strings of pearls are still around her neck,
The gems of gold her temples coldly deck ;
Those wedding ornaments, in gaudy trim,
Ill suit a brow so cold, an eye so dim :—
And as they bore her from her couch, the blast,
With ruffian gust, athwart her forehead pass'd,
Raising the ringlets from these features,—when
She seem'd upbraiding them in death—'twas then
The chieftain heard them pass, but never took
From the cold deck his fix'd and lowering look ;
Yet all might see his bosom's mighty heave,
As if his soul from earth was taking leave.
'Tis done !—one plunge within the restless sea
Proclaims their triumph—and his misery !
The hollow splash, the whirling of the stream,
Like roll of thunder, broke upon his dream ;
He bent his maddening eye, to take the last
Long farewell look, before the vision pass'd ;
He saw the waves receive her beauteous clay,
He saw the white surf bear it far away ;
And through the glassy tide his eye could trace
A transient glitter of her cold white face ;

He saw her bright brow, in its sinking motion,
Float like a moment's moonshine on the ocean,
While her dark hair, loose in dishevell'd charm,
And one dead motion of her fair round arm,
Which, as she sunk within the yawning tide,
One dreadful moment skiff'd the vessel's side,
And seem'd as waving him a long adieu!—
His brain grew sick—a mist beset his view—
His eye spun dizzy, and his gasping breath
Seem'd rattling in the fiery thirst of death ;
But yet he sigh'd not—though his heart beat deep,
Before his crew he scorn'd at last to weep ;
But staggering back, with eye of fix'd disdain
Against the broken mast he lean'd again.

XVIII.

Their threats were o'er ; but now the broken wave
Hung yawning o'er the galley like a grave,
While shriek'd the tempest through the boiling sleet,
Spreading its masses like a winding sheet .
Above the crew, who, now that hope was gone,
Stood on the deck like images of stone,
With fix'd orbs starting in their straining view,
As if they wish'd to pierce death through and through,

Then grapple him and perish ; and their chief,
With heart high swelling more in wrath than grief,
Stands as the Hebrew stood, before he rent
The marble shafts of Dagon's temple, pent
Amid the ruin of the waters, high
His naked arm around the mast—his eye
Deep, darkly flashing on the thundery air,
As if the lightning show'd his virgin there.
The sea like mantle swings athwart his breast,
His raven tresses, now his only crest,
Stream on the broken hurricane—his grasp,
Strong as a giant's, grips, with desperate clasp,
The rattling cordage, while the vessel swung,
Like drunkard o'er the floods that round her sung
Their song of death—and on his bearded lip
Disdain and pride have drank each quiver up,
And with his spirit's striving, and the strain
Of his strong limbs, full many a purple vein,
Swollen and black, in their wild tension now
Start round his stately neck and haughty brow.

XIX.

By this a leak had swamp'd their shatter'd bark ;
They saw the world departing, and the dark

Night of eternity begin to close
Its sunless shadows round their day of woes.
Hope now was dead, as they had shrunk before
And wrong'd their chief, whom they can serve no more,
They blush'd to ask forgiveness, but they stood
Serenely gloomy in unshaken mood.
'Twas now they scorn'd to shrink—they felt a pride
At thus expiring by their leader's side,
Defiance in their air—the same which they
Had often worn on many a dreadful day.
They stood collected, though death met their view,
As if they long'd to welcome one they knew,
Not tremble at his dark approach—and now
A savage mirth sat lightly on each brow,
At the wild thought of thus expiring free
Upon their own loved element, the sea—
At dying thus as patriot brothers should,
And knell'd by nature in her wildest mood,
No tyrant's tread to sully their deep grave—
Their only mourner the eternal wave.
They turn and eye their chief, as if to mark
The thoughts that cross'd him in an hour so dark ;
As if they wish'd to see if their last act
Atoned for the rude strife some moments back ;

As if they long'd to witness, ere their end,
One glance that told them he was still their friend.
The lightning pass'd them in its jagged flight,
Wild as the gleam of Etna seen at night;
Its burning arrows smete the hissing air
Beneath its torch—and he is standing there,
A beam of triumph in his hollow eye :
It is enough—they now are proud to die.

XX.

Yes, he has yearn'd unto his native band !
They were the children of his father's land !
He felt a savage joy to see them wait
So calm and gallantly the frown of fate ;
And they must part as friends, who oft have stood
And proved that holy token with their blood.
What though in hours gone by their threats were rude ?
'Twas but despair that waked that moment's feud.
Now they are knit at parting—they shall sink,
Not like cold bosoms sever'd link by link,
But by each other's side, as freemen lie,
Who grapple death triumphantly and die.

XXI.

Now they embrace each other—and the heart
A moment shudders, at the thought to part
From what it long had loved—had known—had felt,
And proved in many a deed that will not melt
With all the other scenes of days gone by,
But to the latest haunt life's closing eye.
They pause—around them rolls the black abyss;
The galley reels—they cling, they fondly kiss—
'Tis o'er—each proud lip quivers not—they stand
Link'd like a band of spectres hand in hand;
The white spray dashing on their brows—their hair
Streaming abroad upon the squally air;
Each swarthy eye, that day-star of the face,
Seems fix'd to marble in its hollow case;
The thunder tears on high its fiery road—
A moment's hurried prayer ascends to God,
Short and convulsive, hope's expiring groan,
Where all the spirit echoes in the tone;
Again they're swathed in ocean's dark eclipse—
That thrilling prayer has left their ashy lips—
Has peal'd—has died along the midnight air:
The sea rolls on—no ship is drifting there!

One lonely eddy whirling in the blast,
One broken splinter of a floating mast,
Some shatter'd shreds of rigging and a sail,
With here and there a turban on the gale,
And for a moment, ere drawn down for ever,
A few convulsive hands—a gasp—a quiver—
A livid face—a wild, a starting eye,
Bent in its last despair upon the sky—
A heave—a shriek—a whirl amid the sea—
A frenzied clench—a groan of agony—
That hollow groan bespeaks their latest woes :
'Tis silent ! and the waters o'er them close ;
The mountain waves again are rolling on,
But Death walks o'er their glassy crests alone !

XXII.

Ceased is the tempest—and each crystal star
Looks o'er the riot of the clouds afar,
Calm in the blue of heaven their fronts they lave,
Or gaze in loveliness upon the wave,
Bright mysteries, that stand as sentinels
Round the pavilion where the Highest dwells.
The blast, changed to a zephyr, wanders by,
Piping in joy ; and, o'er the azure sky,

Floats in its beauty many a snowy cloud,
That well might seem a spirit in its shroud ;
While high o'er all, uplifting her dim form,
The broad round moon looks on the dying storm,
Silent and calm, like mercy o'er the bed
Where guilt despairing rolls the restless head.
Beneath her moans the everlasting deep,
That like a maniac, whom no bonds can keep,
Has worn at last his stormy soul asleep,
And, spent by his own struggle, lies at length,
A fearful thing o'erwrought by giant strength.

XXIII.

The morn is up, as fresh and full of mirth
As the first rosy dawn that bliss'd the earth,
When, in the warm and shining solitude,
God hung o'er nature, and pronounced her good.
The morn is up !—the young, wild, living morn,
Treading the clouds to mist in playful scorn,
Waving her sunny sceptre through the trees,
Spreading her golden tresses on the breeze,
Shaking her sparkling wings o'er mount and stream—
But there are none to hail her cheerful beam !
Last night has been a fearful night : the wave
Hath proved to many a manly heart a grave :

A gallant vessel drifted on its brow
Last evening through the storm—where is she now ?
Ask the wild wind, that yet is heard afar
Retiring slowly from his watery war ;
Ask the rude surge, that dashes on the shore
Of yon bleak island, and its dreary roar,
With voice of death, alone will make reply,
“ Beneath our depths a hundred heroes lie !”

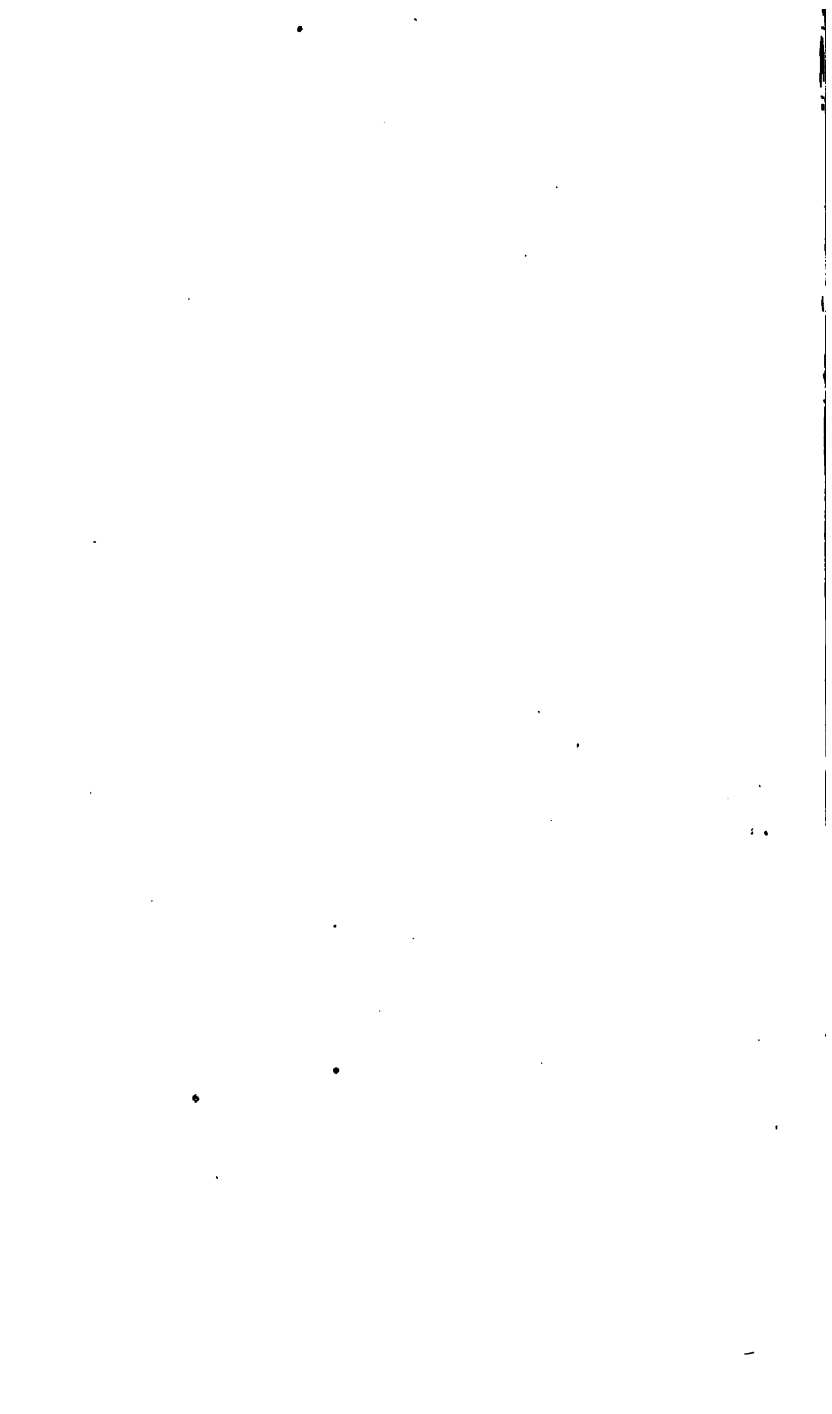
XXIV.

Beneath a spreading palm, that overhung
A dull grey cliff, and to the midnight sung,
Lay two fair forms upon the shining beach,
Their long dark tresses yet within the reach
Of the young billows, rippling o'er the shells,
Which strew the sand where desolation dwells.
Above them tower'd black everlasting blocks
Of herbless granite—and amongst the rocks,
Worn with the surge, and shrunk by summer's ray,
The wreck of many a vanish'd century lay—
The spoil of fleets—the moss of ages, dark
Wreathed round the ribs of many a stranded bark ;
Shells of a thousand forms, amid the bloom
Of ocean weeds,—and many a wild-bird's plume ;

And chalky bones, the shroudless wrecks of man,
Glitter'd in thick confusion to the sun,
Through which the green snake and the lizards rife
Crawl'd in the lazy luxury of life.
There, on the fringes of that naked strand,
With others stretch'd in silence o'er the sand,
Lay two as blighted as the autumn leaf—
Young Isidora and her roving chief!
They lie apart upon the ocean's verge,
Their garments heaving with the heaving surge;
And round them, in the blue and lifeless air,
Is many a swarthy face and bosom bare,
Defiance still upon each lip and brow,
Their latest look—it cannot alter now!
And see the wild birds from their eyrie spring,
And screaming flap o'er them their heavy wing,
View the pale bosoms with a greedy eye,
And whoop, and hover in the misty sky!
These hearts were bold—but, ah! they cannot scare
Spoilers like you—no,—ye may fatten there,
For Zariff and his wave-borne mates are gone—
'Tis only dust that ye can feed upon!

END OF THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

THE FIRST POET.



THE FIRST POET.

THE INVOCATION.

COME, Solitude, divine inspirer, come !
And, from thy misty tabernacle, breathe
Thy melancholy and sublime array
Of mighty images around my soul,
Such as attend thee at the dead of night
In the far silent wilderness, where thou,
Midst storms, and rocks, and clouds, and cataracts,
Hast piled in mute sublimity thy throne.
Dread spirit ! who, enshrined in darkness, sits
On the storm-paved and sun-defying ice
Of Teneriffe or Andes, mid the clouds
Borne from the far Atlantic—Mystic power !

Who breathes and walks the universe, when men
Lie in their graves—Come from thy Runic dome,
Built by the polar hurricane, from out
The world-engulfing ice; where continents,
Frozen like marble, lie upon the sea,
Where dash'd like atom 'gainst the spiry cliffs
Dies the strong whale, or vainly strives to break
The bars that wedge him in upon the deep—
Those icicles like mail-clad men who charge
The huge intruder, if he dares to force
His way through their mute realms—or leave thy home
Among the dark Canadian forests, where
Twilight hath ever hung amid the trees,
Where time is strangled in the leafy gloom,
And life is humbled to the shining snake,
Crawling like fire amid their net-work—Come
In the wild whirl of the tornado—Come
From thy far pyramids of dazzling sand,
Those oceans without floods, those shining seas
Of dusty waves, where the brown Arab sits
Beside his war-horse in the heat of noon,
Alone and statue-like—or leave thy home
Where Zara stretches like a wither'd world
From the Atlantic to the sea of Ind,

Seasonless, herbless, lifeless, and burn'd up ;
Deserts that look like matter ere the voice
Of God was heard to bid creation live ;
Where even the winds seem pillow'd 'neath the sun,
And the hot air feels rotting as if death
Hung o'er it with his mute eternity ;
No yell, no scream, no rustle in the air
Of wandering bird ; no shadow on the sand,
Save the dull checker'd twilight of the clouds,
That nightly muster up among the stars
Or lowering hang like night-mare o'er the sleep,
The ghastly slumber, of the wilderness :—
In thy sublime dominions, never comes
The shadow of a change,—that fickle nymph
Whom men call Fortune, with her airy gifts
And April glories, blinds no kingly fool ;
Here rules no Alexander, in his pride
Of mad ambition, reveling o'er the globe
With slaves and drunkards ; here no Cæsar writes
In venal page, that he, in might of soul,
Slew twice three million men to reign an hour ;
Here no Napoleon, fortune's wilder child,
Writhes 'neath the lowest spoke of all her wheel,
Now covering empires with his hosts, and then,

Like common cut-throat, striking for his life,
And tiger-like, expiring at the last
Within his savage cage amid the sea.
The time is past for chiefs and Nimrods now
To grasp and rule the solitary world !
Ye sceptred despots of the universe !
There is a lesson chronicled by time—
A tale not soon forgotten ; pause and know
What towers too high attracts the lightning's blade,
From out its scabbard of the gather'd clouds—
Learn that a mighty people, gently used,
Will roll on like a river, fattening all
The banks round ; but if oppression mar
The mighty torrent, it o'er-leaps all bounds,
And with resistless and destroying sway,
Sweeps thrones and mitres, institutes and crowns,
And all distinctions to the very dust.

Spirit of the existing world ! who lovest
To sit among the pyramids, and dream
Of old annihilated empires lost
With all their millions in the night of years ;
Who lov'st to lean o'er grey walls, and the tombs,
The massy stones, the fragments, and the shafts

Of pillars prostrate, obelisks o'erturn'd !—
Come from the column'd vale, where ancient Nile
Pours down his desert waters to the sea,
From the long misty colonnades of Thebes,
Where frown the history of a perish'd world,
Sculptured in living granite,—nameless tales,
Dead languages, and creeds, and mysteries,
Wild giant thoughts hew'd on gigantic piles,
Where in rude hieroglyphics, perish'd minds
Look out from the grey obelisks and walls,
And the strange zodiac on the temples tells,
In mystic and forgotten characters,
The science of dead empires—savage heaps,
Reared with the blood, the treasure, and the tears
Of shackled millions now in mockery,
Without their mottoes, standing o'er the dead :
The Pharaohs, Ptolemies, and Cæsars, with
The wreck of forty centuries, sleep on
In dim forgetfulness, while o'er their graves
The Memphian pyramids and Theban tombs
Tower o'er their ashes, and in silent scorn
Point only to the tyrants at their feet.—*

* Speaking of the ruins of Thebes, a modern traveller says—" You see them as Cambyses saw them, when he stopped his chariot

And last of all, though not thy least domain,
Come from the hills of Scotland, girdled with
Their sea of heather, where the hero's cairn,
The stone of other years, looks lonely out
Grey in the silent sunshine !—Spirit, come
From mine own glen of hoar sublimity,
Where thou and the wild eagle sit alone,
In misty grandeur on the cliffs of Col !
Come, then, fair mother of each lonely thought,
Come from thy lonely haunts, and be my guide !
Thou wert the parent—the bright principle
That fired the spirit of the earliest bard,
And still thy fairy harp and wand control
Thy kindred bosoms in these latter days.

wheels, and the Persian war-cry ceased before these mysterious remains of an older world.—In the locality you cannot err, you are amid the ruins of heathen temples, temples which the Roman came, as you come, to visit and admire, and the Greek before him. And you know that the priest and king, lord and slave, the festival throng, and the solitary worshipper, trode for centuries where you do ; and you know that there have been the crowding flight, the neighing of the war-horse, and the shout as of a king among them, all on this silent spot ; the ruins are neither grey nor blackened,—like the bones of man they seem to whiten under the sun of the desert ; here is no lichen, no moss, no wall-flower, or wild fig-tree to conceal their deformities ; no ; all is the nakedness of desolation, the colossal skeleton of giant fabrics, standing in the unwatered sun, in solitude and silence."

THE FIRST POET.

I.

LIFE ! thou mysterious principle, whose links
Stretch on from star to star, from world to world,
Upheld through all eternity, by Him,
The quickening spirit, whose creative word
Illumes a universe, or rears a flower :
Life ! thou art endless—thy magnetic chain
Stretches athwart infinity, and joins
Systems the most remote, and our old globe
Is but the wreck of a far nobler sphere
Struck into chaos, many a thousand years
Before creation bore the print of man.
And if we trust earth's womb, that perish'd orb
Was peopled by a godlike brotherhood,
A vast and glorious world—the smallest isle,

Which slumber'd in its least distinguish'd sea,
O'ermatch'd our star in magnitude—its hills,
Ten times the stature of the Andes, tower'd,
Clad with their leagues of rolling forests, where
Wander'd a million happy herds, and things
To which the Mammoths of our ancient earth
Were cubs in pettiness,—and mighty birds,
Which could have struck the proudest eagles down
With one wild flap of their tremendous wings,—
And old enormous towers and battlements,
Outmeasuring Babel, or the hoary piles
Built by the hardy Cainites—and long
Beneath the voice of its majestic laws,
Roll'd that fair planet, till the word of God
Bade ruin crush it into chaos—then
Its sinking continents and strangled seas
Became a sunless mass, from which our globe,
As ebb'd the tide of dark confusion back,
Felt through her slimy breast the germs of life,
And at Jehovah's bidding leapt a world.
Such mysteries fired the earliest bard—who saw
The buried secrets of an age gone past.
The world to him was young and beautiful;
He loved the mountain and the wilderness,

The sun in his high glory, the pale moon,
The floating stars, and in the voiceless depth
Of sable night, he made his lonely heart
Familiar with the signs and mysteries
Of the great living universe ; he loved
The deep dark ocean in its wasteful strength,
And, oh ! more than them all, the laughing flowers,
Those rosy children of the morning, charm'd
His melancholy soul. He was the child
Of freedom, rear'd upon the sunny hills.
Each change that cross'd his mighty Mother's brow,
Whether of sun or storm, came on his heart
Like gushing music, and he fed his soul
With rapture borrow'd from creation's beauty.
His mind was but one echo of the sounds
And scenes that taught him the wild rudiments
Of the sweet lesson,—and his spirit glow'd,
And burn'd, and ripen'd in the solitude,
A better portion of the elements.
He was a son of song—he loved to sit
And dream 'mid the unpeopled wilds, and gaze
On their grey summits, glittering in the sun.
Man's haunts were not for him, his mind outshone
Their little bounds,—and made eternity

A field to revel in, and in its strength
Communion held with high and holy things—
Those worlds unnumber'd that, like icicles,
Hang shining 'mid the dark and mountainous clouds
Brilliant and beautiful.

II.

His dwelling was the waste, but such green wastes
As blossom by the rivers of the east;
He made his arbour in an ancient wood,
Whose trees, coeval with the birth of time,
Lifted their giant crests, and wildly wove
The atmosphere to twilight, where each bird
That charms the ear of wandering echo made
The air melodious with their songs of love.
There would the lone one sit, and eye the sun
Shine through the net-work of the clustering leaves,
Like the far burnish'd ocean waves—and he
Has seen at eve the blue and ghostlike moon
Rise o'er the desert, and ascend the clouds,
While his green temple, with its fretted work
Of trunks, and buds, and branches, o'er her face
Drew their soft dancing bars, through whose wild folds
She look'd like beauty in captivity.

His midnight grotto was a cave, which seem'd
The shatter'd tomb of some old earthquake, dug
By the old miner Time, at nature's dawn.
It needed not the aid of sun or moon—
A thousand constellations glitter'd there,
Such as night kindles in the womb of earth,
Diamond, and chrysolite, and radiant gem ;
Pure as the stainless ether, drooping low
From the blue roof, like icy willows, hung
Clear sparry columns, twining their huge arms
Round the hoar skeletons of buried trees
Congeal'd to stone, and towering like the shafts
Of some cathedral, while beneath their arch,
Reflecting all, as ocean does the stars
When night shows her blue thousands, roll'd a stream
Cold as the moonshine, filling the wide vault
With all the rapture and the soul of sound.

III.

The songs, that once had gladden'd on their hills
The youth of earth's first summer, were no more ;
They had departed when the beauty pass'd
From the devoted world, and since the flood,
No strain danced through the dreaming atmosphere.

Long sigh'd the bard for tones to imitate
The gentle melodies that ever rung
O'er the mysterious universe. One eve,
He sat in silence on an aged stone,
Half hid among the weeds—the pedestal
Of some old pillar, which had been set up
O'er the first ashes of ambition,—sweet
The little flowers were raising their shut eyes,
Parting their ivory lips in thankfulness,
For the soft amour of the playful breeze.
He sat him on the stone ; and o'er him sung
A tree, whose skeleton branches oft had made
Wild music in the midnight ; evening's beams
Fell in a golden shower upon the grass ;
The clouds reposed above him, and the sun
Sat at his western window, gazing out
Upon the glorious ocean and the hills.
One star was up, and far away the moon
Look'd breaking in upon the balmy air.

IV.

He sat, when, lo ! the nightingale arose,
And chanted from her bower of sleeping clouds
A hymn of joy and gratitude to heaven ;

The minstrel heard the music, and he own'd
The bird his master ; still his spirit pined
To rival the wild songster. In his cave,
He listen'd to the viewless winds at night,
Singing their melody along the sea ;
And oft he sat when twilight held her harp
To the calm zephyr, or when thundering by
The ruffian tempest struck the shrieking strings,
And crush'd its thousand melodies at once
To one wild burst of grandeur ;—the far deep
Lent him its voice of majesty—he join'd
The soft, the tender, the magnificent,
And, with a spirit fitted thus to feel
And mingle with the glorious mysteries
Of earth and earth's, he made the earliest harp.

V.

Again he sat with his wild instrument,
Upon the stone ; his rival far above
Was singing in the moonshine, when his lyre
Broke on her startled ear ; she stopp'd,—he sung ;
She paused, then tried to drown or imitate
His music, but in vain was all her skill.
Worn with the struggle, she at last dropp'd down

Upon the poet's bosom ; her poor heart
Was broken, music mightier than her own
Had snapp'd its cords,—one flutter of her wings,
And one wild note of pride and agony,
Proclaim'd the poet's triumph—but her fate
Wrung the first tears from his young eye, which fell
The meed of pity on his rival's breast.

VI.

Years came—and pass'd—and perish'd in the gulf
Of dark eternity—and still he sung
In his wild Eden, yet he often sigh'd
To see the world—its ruin'd cities—and
Pause o'er the faded wonders of the past.
He often sigh'd, while gazing on the sky,
The blue and boundless universe of space,
That girdled his green sphere—and as the day
Sank o'er the mountains, he would wish to be
Travelling the shining deserts that reposed
Beneath its parting glory. He was one
Whom nature in his infancy had led
To freedom's altar rear'd among the hills.
He left his lone retreat, roam'd o'er a world
Fresh from its Maker's glory, where the sun

In its young laughing childhood smiled upon
Woods, mid whose rank luxuriance giant time
Had left no foot-prints,—as he wandered on,
Around his lonely tread, the warrior winds,
Those wanderers of the universe, with harp
Of desolation, sung their mountain dirge,
And the old eagles, lordly and alone,
Plunged through the floating wilderness of clouds.
Around him rose the sharp and jagged steeps,
With all their thousand forests waving wide
O'er crags, and dazzling cataracts that drowned
The wild ear of the listening wind—the pines
Wreath'd round their granite cliffs, like distant sea
Swung in their depth of darkness, and the snow
On the blue cutting summits glancing lay,
Like water sleeping 'neath the dazzling sun.
Amid the old gray icicles, huge oaks
Heaved up their rent and ghastly ribs to heaven,
Like grizzly spectres mid the clouds, and shook
Their tresses o'er the chasms ; others lay
Shattered in all their rude fantastic strength,
Swept from their slaty thrones, and wildly hurl'd
Impetuous down the adamantine gulfs
Of the black yawning desert.—All bespoke

The wreck of past existence ; yet they charm'd
His spirit.—In his journeying, he came
Where stood a city of the fated tribes
Of earth's old dwellers, ere the deluge rose
A wilderness of ruin, mountains piled
Of fallen domes wreathed round with ocean weeds.

VII.

'Twas sunset when that child of song approach'd
The desolated capital—the day
Was sinking down in glory to the west,
Tinging the marble on the highest ridge
Of the old palaces, while the black grass,
Sown by the wandering winds among the stones,
Waved dark along the shining atmosphere.
'Twas sunset, but unclouded in the east,
The stars were rising, and their silver light
Stream'd through the high and azure rents of ruin.
The Poet singled out a dome whose front
Rose like a mount unlevell'd o'er a cloud
Of wild green palms, that seem'd to sing their song
Of solitude to charm the fiery waste.
He reached the hall where once a monarch reign'd,
Where blocks of granite, huge and measureless,

Bore the vast twilight roof that almost seem'd
The distant vault of heaven, so broad and high
The mighty arch hung yawning. On he went
Treading the clammy floor with solemn foot,
And starting at his own unearthly sound,
The first that had for seasons echoed there.
High on an ivory throne o'erlaid with gold,
Sat the last skeleton, whose withered arm
Had ruled the famish'd nations—on his brow
Gleam'd the tiara, and the sceptre lay
As newly from his bony fingers dropp'd;
Vainly it sparkled on the marble slabs
Of the grass-cover'd pavement, where the dead
Lay stretched in masses round the fearful throne,
Where sat the royal mummy, as if they,
Smote by the plague before the deluge came,
Had perish'd in the act of adoration,
Each with his bare brow bent upon the floor,
Like worshippers, within the hall of death
Kneeling before their monarch on his couch.
And well that sceptred skeleton beseem'd
The king of terrors, for his fleshless skull
Look'd bare and brown beneath his cap of gold;

And the pale hands on which the bracelets glitter'd
Were pointed as in mockery at the dead.

VIII.

The bard felt many a vision cloud his brain
While brooding o'er the mystery of death ;
He left the old oblivious city, and
Crossing the mountains, like a bird escaped,
He traced a river's track, till he had reach'd
A clime where pastoral life and innocence
Bloom'd o'er the valleys—there he pitched his tent
Among the happy shepherds of the land.
He was their favourite, for he sung of love,
Such love as bless'd the morning of mankind ;
He knew nought of oppression—all were free—
A patriarchal brotherhood ; but soon
He saw a monster, with the name of king,
Drive his swart legions o'er the laughing plains
Where peace and freedom flourish'd—then he felt
His spirit wither, but he struck his harp,
Wild and sublimely with a master's hand,
And sung of liberty ! His drooping friends,
The fair-hair'd shepherds of the hills, like men
Starting from slumber, heard his melody ;

They buckled on their maiden swords and met
The despots in their valleys : freedom's child
Led the young patriots to the battle, and
His harp, and falchion, taught earth's tyrant first
The rights of liberty, the power of song !

IX.

Returning from the slaughter of his foes
An ambush met him,—and the bleeding one
Was borne in triumph to earth's sceptred scourge,
The savage hunter of the human race.
On march'd the chief, revolving in his mind
The punishment of freedom's earliest bard.

X.

Beneath the curtains of departing day
Sleep the proud palaces of Babylon ;
And that huge tower, piled at the sunny dawn
Of the first laughing summer morn that rose
Upon the fresh green world, when God again
Roll'd back the strangling waters of the flood,
Heaved high its sable and majestic front
Far up among the drapery of the clouds.
The cold blue sky, like an eternity

Seem'd swinging high in glory and in light
Over the realms of time—the beauteous moon
Walk'd stainless, gilding the high columns, till
The shafts of marble in the azure air
Look'd like huge icicles, shot 'mid the stars
In clear and cold sublimity. The earth
As time had died, hung smiling 'mid a flush
Such as the morning wears, when first he walks
From out his dewy palace in the east.

XI.

Such was the hour, that saw the captive bard
Chain'd in a darksome cell—how different from
His silver grotto on the mountain side !
Nine days have dipp'd their tresses in the sea
Since he has breathed the dancing air of heaven.
He had but one companion—his wild harp,
That friend which taught him in the wilderness
Spells ne'er to be forgotten, when he roam'd
Free as the sunbeam o'er the silent hills.
Now in captivity he struck its cords ;
The clouds forsook his soul, and with its tone
The charms of infancy and nature rush'd
Like dayspring o'er his lone and broken heart.

XII.

There was a captive girl—one like the hind
Of her own deserts, delicately wild,
And shy, and timorous, but beautiful
As daylight breaking o'er the shining crests
Of the ice-cover'd mountains. She was young,—
A wild bewitching flower—she was all soul—
A being such as poets in their dreams
Would bring on earth :—alas ! she was a slave,
But slavery's serpent tooth had not gnawn through
The cords of love which tune the female heart.
She was a shape of glory, and she moved
Upon the earth like summer clouds in heaven,
All life and lightness ; she was form'd for love ;
Torn from her native land, she felt as one
Seeking a parent in this cruel world.
Night was her friend—her gentle spirit kept
Its vigils in the darkness ; at those hours
Of solitary silence, oft she heard
The bard at midnight tune his solemn harp,
Its echo, floating from the murky cell,
Crept like a breathing dream upon her brain :
It came like the sweet music of a shower

Dancing along the desert's weary sand,
Pouring the visions of her early youth
Like blossoms round the fountain of her soul.
In ecstasy of spirit, she resolved
To free the captive for his charm of song.
She had the power—for beauty is all power—
To reason with the despot, and she won
The secret of his low and lonely vault ;
And when the stars were dreaming in the clouds,
She sought his bitter dwelling :—lo ! he hears,
Stealing like life along the voiceless vault,
The gentle echo of her naked foot !
She comes—her eye, itself a spirit, flash'd
On him its immortality of charms,
And her red torch hiss'd in the dark, and scared
A group of sleeping bats that screaming rose,
Beating and flapping 'gainst the horrid roof,
Rushing from light like spectres of the damn'd.

XIII.

Sweet is the voice, and beautiful the feet
Of him who travels on the mountains, bringing
Glad tidings to the sorrowful of soul !
Oh ! thou art beautiful, thou midnight hour,

With all thy stars and glittering zone of worlds ;
But not so fair as she, who, in the strength
Of holiest affection, comes to sing
The song of freedom in the captive's ear !
Few words—for, oh ! her beauty needed few,
To reason with his spirit—they are past,
He knows her bosom's generous resolve,
And thrills with more than gratitude ; their hearts
Are knit with band as sacred and as firm
As if a century had shed its suns
Of glory on their nuptials—they depart,
The first rapt poet and his rosy bride ;
Wed by the mutual music of the soul,
'Mid chains and dungeons, hand in hand they go,
She like the laughing daughter of the morn,
Leading her bridegroom forward from the dark ;
Her long unbraided tresses wreath'd her neck
Like shower of sunshine, falling on the lyre
Which her young bard had slung. His every sense—
His heart—his soul spoke in each throbbing pulse ;
His bright eye, kindled with a lover's fire,
Feeds on his virgin, who in beauty shone
Amid her dreams of sorrow, like the sun,

The calm and morning sun, when looking out
Between the blue clouds of a summer shower.

XIV.

They tread the vaults,—a low and desolate breeze,
Like ruin's spirit wailing from the tombs,
Crept through their windings, strangled in the grasp
Of the thick stagnant atmosphere ; their way
Clammy and cold was o'er a heap of bones,
Whiten'd by age—the shroudless wrecks of those
Who long had pined in darkness and in chains
Beneath some tyrant's vengeance, and had died
Unsepulchred, uncoffin'd, and unknell'd.
The chill and glittering damps like icicles
Hung from the roof, and ever and anon
Fell with a heavy splash upon the dead,
Or spread in slimy brightness o'er the walls,
Where stuck the earth-worm and the spider foul,
And crawl'd each hateful insect—where the bat
Clung with his shrivell'd wing, or hissing flew
Like rattling skeleton athwart the gloom ;
And they could see the dusky lizard shine
Green 'neath the red tongue of their torch ; the trail
Of sleepy adders that ne'er saw the moon,

Glitter'd like lines of fire, or sharp and shrill
They heard them hiss through the unburied dead.
Now, from a broken loophole, they have drank
The dancing breeze—and on the shining sky
They gaze in ecstasy. 'Twas hush'd ;—the earth
Slept cradled in the moonshine ; while the gale,
Echo's young whispering handmaid, shaded back
The playful tresses of the amorous clouds
From the white-bosom'd moon, that sat unveil'd,
High 'mid the starry solitudes of night,
Where silence in his loneliness had spread
A couch to rest her in the silver air.
While looking through the bars, an eagle pass'd,
Floating like messenger between the stars :
“ See, my fair Ion ! ” cried the enraptured bard,
“ There wanders liberty ! Go, mighty bird,
Upon thy shining pilgrimage—away,
Beautiful rider of the tempest ! thou
Art far above the tyranny of man ;
Thy wings are fetterless, and thy glad eye,
Bright in the spirit of wild freedom, drinks
Undazzled the pure glory of high heaven !
Soar on, bright one ! and show earth's kings that still
Unfetter'd things are in the shackled world ! ”

XV.

An opening, form'd by some adventurous slave
Who sought his liberty, now welcom'd them ;
Long years had spun a veil of trunks and leaves
Over its jaws, through which the twinkling stars,
The rolling moon, and the blue light of heaven
Shot like a thousand arrows. They were free
And lightsome as the fairy-footed fawns
That sported round them in the moony air!
They left the palaces of slaves, and sought,
Ere morning call'd the watching starlights in,
A home among the mountains. With the sun
They reach'd the wilds, and travell'd till his beam
Flash'd in its last and far magnificence
Along the high peaks of the solitude,
Which lifted their white crests—like lonely isles—
Amid an ocean blue and limitless.
Their only kin those calm and gathering orbs,
That doff their veils of darkness in the night,
And look unwrinkled from eternity
Upon their awful beauty—steadfast cliffs,
Whose visitors are the unbridled winds,
Brushing in savage glory as they pass

The thin snows from their sepulchres of ice.
Amid those wastes they travell'd ; four bright suns
Beheld them still among the rocks, beside
A stream, which lip of man had never quaff'd,
Whose mass of crystal waters had sung on
Amid the desert for a thousand years,
Unheard by aught save echo in her cave,
Or the high wandering vulture, when athirst
Plunging from his dark throne of gather'd clouds,
To drink its flashing floods and scream in joy.
They sat upon the grey rocks ; o'er their head
The forests waved their green and rolling tops
Like gather'd storms, and down the shatter'd cliffs
The river rush'd like madness ; the far vales
Drank in the thunder of its coming—there
Sat the young pair beneath the willows, like
The earliest twain of Paradise, ere sin
Shook down the blossoms from the tree of life.

XVI.

It was the bright calm of a summer day,
A gorgeous eve, when their deserted path,
Emerging from the mountains, vanish'd in
A vale like Eden.—'Twas a lovely hour,

A sweet warm silent sunset streaming o'er
A thousand blue and solitary hills.
Above the parted clouds hung in the sky,
Like curtains drawn by silence to reveal
One glorious glimpse of paradise—they saw,
Like a vast waveless ocean without bound,
Plains, where a thousand groves of deathless green,
Laugh'd 'mid the summer air. There dwelt the brave—
The sons of liberty, who watch'd their flocks
In the wild flowery wilderness. The sun
Is sinking as they reach the mighty vale ;
Low-footed twilight, with her dewy wings,
Floats dreamlike o'er the velvet face of earth,
Dropping her tears upon each wither'd flower,
Like Pity cherishing the broken heart.
No hum is heard, save where the insect tribes
Fill with their sleepy song the dreaming air ;
The buds are folding till some wandering gale
Opens the bosom of the drooping rose,
And like a lover from his virgin's cheek
Steals in that wild embrace one kiss of love.

XVII.

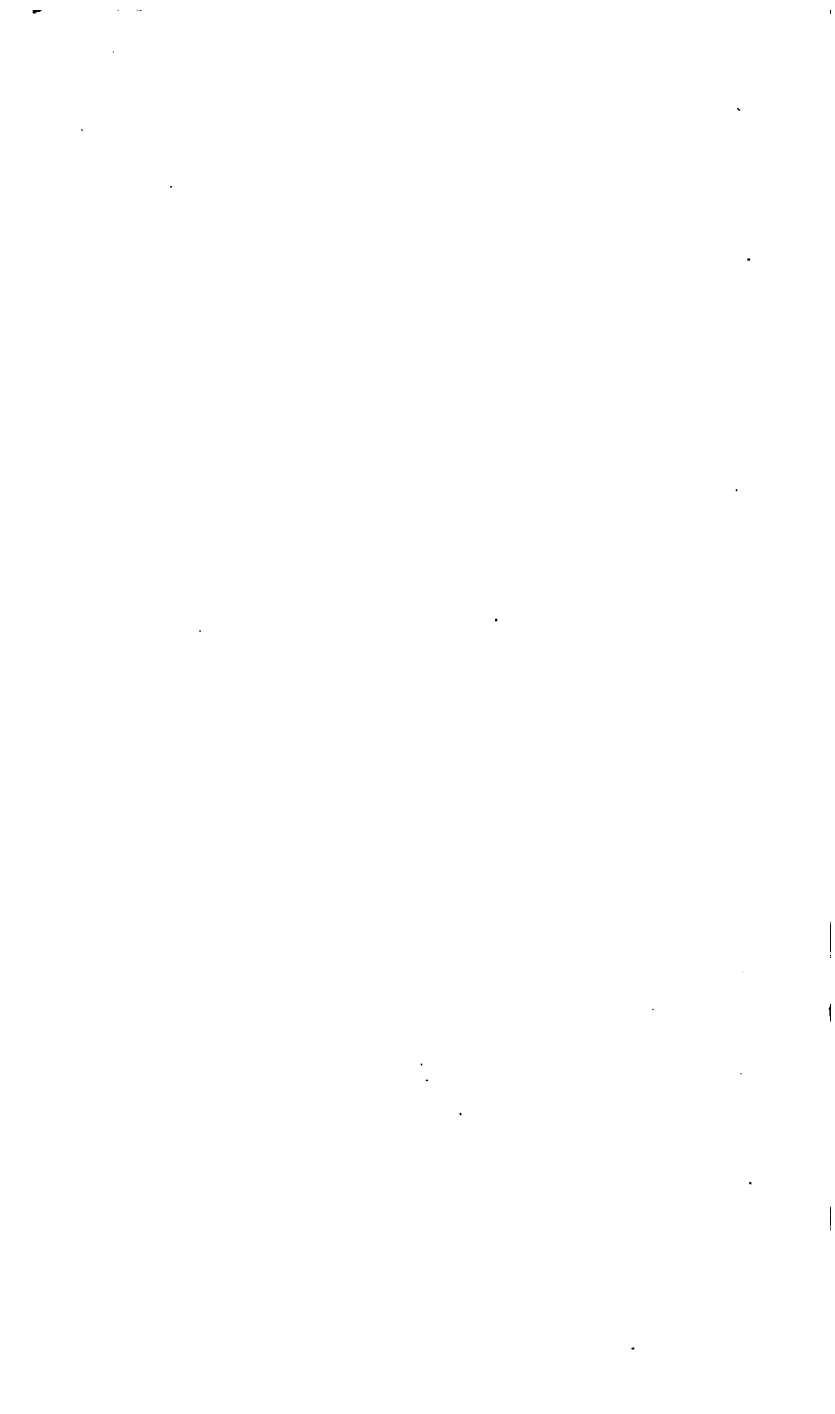
Down came the lovely strangers ; they were met

By the young shepherds, and their rosy nymphs.
The poet struck his harp—the first that e'er
Rang in those valleys ; and he made their tribes
The willing vassals of his gentle reign.
This was the golden age—the poet ruled
Over the shepherd thousands,—his wild lyre
His only sceptre—all was peace and love.
The thunder voice of war was never heard ;
No tyrant ventured to o'erthrow their bowers
Of happiness, from which the fairest birds
Made the air vocal with their melody ;
No despot swept the sky—the speckled snake
Hiss'd harmless through the dance—no tiger lurk'd
Among the copse, the messenger of death
To the young antelope ;—each shepherd sat
Beside his bower, beneath the spreading palm,
And worshipp'd God in sunshine ;—all was love,
A sweet millennium of the passions—and
Ion, the empress of the sylvan scene,
Like beauty moved among the beautiful,
She and her youthful bard ; the joyous pair
Throned in those happy solitudes, where all
Blossom'd as nature blossom'd, when mankind
Roam'd in the wilds of Eden—there no tears,

No hate, no sorrow, visited those vales ;
The very prowlers of the desert lost
Their wonted fierceness when they wander'd near
The rosy labyrinth. On the smooth green hills,
A thousand arbours, fashion'd by the sun,
Of buds and blossoms, held the rural throng.
There the young poet and his bride were crown'd
With diadem more beautiful than gold,
The blushing coronal of laughing spring,
Twined by the fairest of the luscious land.
Thus song first kindled in the soul of man
The flame of liberty, and bade him meet
And brave oppression in the teeth of death ;
And song first bade the shepherds of the hill,
(Who true to nature, felt its harmony)
Erect a throne in their green wilderness,
On which they crown'd the first inspired bard.

END OF THE FIRST POET.

POEMS.



TO THE WIND.

FLEET reveller of the sky ! thy flight is where
Thought cannot follow thee ; along the verge
Of the eternal waters, and the bare
Grey crags where fiercely the high tempests charge,
And down their chasms the blue glaciers urge ;
Thou rollest like an earthquake o'er the earth,
Far traveller of the clouds, with wailing dirge,
And thou hast said, in thy gigantic mirth,
The deep shall be my throne; its waves are mine from birth.

I love to hear, when evening's pinions droop
Along the uplands, all thy voices—when
The billowy clouds in their high journey stoop
And brush the forehead of the mountains, then
My spirit bounds with thee through wood and glen.
Thou hast roll'd on for ever—and will roll
When time has sepulchred the hosts of men ;
Thou art not metted to one clime or goal,
Thou may'st arise—rejoice—and travel with the soul.

The ocean is a play-ground unto thee,
Its fleets are toys within thy fiery hand,
When on the glaciers of the mountain sea
Wrapp'd in thy cloak of clouds thou tak'st thy stand ;
When sounds thy trumpet o'er the waters grand,
Thou crushest them like atoms in thine ire,
In vain they fly—in vain their sails expand—
They cannot battle with thy vengeance dire,
Thou stampest on the floods, and hosts at once expire.

And thou hast whistled through the colonnades
That skirt the Libyan desert, and the domes
Of far Palmyra, where from perish'd glades
The kingly lion, lone and lordly, roams ;
Like pleasure through those old deserted homes,
Thou liftest thy shrill voice, as if to call
Lost faces—and dead mirth, that never comes
As they were wont to cheer each pillar'd hall,
Making the wizard Time start from his hoary pall.

Like gentle mother, in thy calmer hour
Thou string'st thy airy harp, and from thy cave
Com'st singing love-songs to each dreaming flower
That faints in thy embrace, and thou dost wave

The grass on many an old, neglected grave
In Scotia's western glens—where fierce and strong
I hear thee o'er those ribs of granite rave
Where Time nursed Ruin ; as thou rid'st along,
Terror upon the rocks sits listening to thy song.

His frenzied playmate, thou dost whirl with death
Athwart the icy highlands of the pole ;
At thy command the frozen oceans breathe,
And burst, and thunder round creation's goal ;
And thou dost rise, and laugh, and leap, and roll,
And dance, and riot o'er the Indian sea,
Where every germ of nature teems with soul,
And thou dost wanton there in sportive glee
Like libertine at home,—wild, wandering, and free.

Where is thy cave, almighty wanderer ! where ?
Does any rein thee on the thunder blast,
And tie thy pinions to the summer air,
And on the waveless ocean bind thee fast,
Or o'er thy giant charger fetters cast ?
Yes ; He who sends thee through his lone domains
Can still thy bounding heart while rushing past,
Yet, as thou dancest o'er thy azure plains, [veins.
Thou'rt like the blood that runs through nature's million

For ever circulating—wild and free—
Rushing and leaping into life and joy.
The earth may be the skeleton—the sea,
The mighty heart—the sun, the glorious eye ;
But thou, careering on, and rolling high,
Seem'st like the life of nature—all are shook,
Thrilling with motion, as thou sweepst by ;
The deep, the clouds, the trees in every nook
Move with thy moving—peace thy sceptre cannot brook.

The glorious ocean of the firmament,
Where sleepeth night, and walks the fair-hair'd day,
From which the worlds are fashion'd; yet, no rent
Yawns on its boundless bosom, nor decay ;
It is the fountain that with gashing play,
Bellows thee forth, like music through the air ;
Spirit of space, the sunbeams pave thy way !
March on, fleet warrior ! o'er the desert bare,
But, 'mid the haunts of men—be merciful and spare !

THE PILGRIM.

He had read, in his bright and early hours,
Of those sunny lands of the east,
Where summer, on a couch of flowers,
Spreads for man an endless feast ;
He left the hearth of his happy home,
His mother and sister's gentle smile,
Through the groves of France, and the ruins of Rome,
He pass'd to the shores of Nile.

The beautiful of the earth was his,
He traced with a heaven-enraptured eye
The lights of creation, whatever is
In nature's storehouse of mystery—
Dead walls, grey columns, and nameless graves,
And mouldering temples sublime and vast,
And mossy cairns, where the wild-weed waves
Had a light that like sunshine o'er him pass'd.

The sky, the deep, all spoke to him
With a language familiar to his soul ;
And shapes that to others were cold and dim,
Around his spirit in light did roll :
Now the huge grey pyramids o'er his head,
Stood in their robe of years sublime,
Rising alone o'er an empire's dead,
Like the solitary spirits of time.

But the dreams of his boyish days were by,
Expiring, he lay on his sandy bed, :
He turn'd and gaz'd on the deep blue sky
That swung like eternity o'er his head,
As if he thought each sparkling star,
Wading the floods of that measureless deep,
Were the souls of his kindred come from afar,
To welcome their boy from sleep.

The fiery sun from its wastes of blue,
Flash'd so unlike that glorious dome,
Where a thousand orbs shone laughing through
The skies of his father's home,
Where oft in their holy light he had met,
The one whose spirit was still his own,

The beautiful being remember'd yet,
When older and lighter thoughts are gone.

The day was showering his latest light
O'er each grey and mystic pyramid,
As death with his heavy wings of night
Each ray from the dreamer hid ;
He raised his dim and feverish glance,
And tried to gaze on the western sky,
But an Arab bent o'er his gory lance,
With his camel, was all that met his eye.

He died—as low o'er the level sand
Fell the last sunny smile to its silent rest,
And his soul pass'd away to his kindred's land
Like a beam to its own calm west ;
Ye may picture hope to those that part
In the yawning jaws of the treacherous main,
But breathe not of home to an exile's heart,
For that spell will snap it in twain.

MY FIRST VOW.

AY—she was young, with gentle heart,
A fairy creature of her kind,
Whose playful beauty had the art
To warp love's magic round the mind.
With brow of light, and eye all soul,
We met, we loved, our spirits stole
Into each other, join'd
With ~~the same fate to bloom~~ or wither,
~~Like two~~ flowers folding in each other.

'Twas eve—and summer, on the wing,
Wanton'd in music through the bowers ;
'Twas eve—and the departing spring
Lay dying on a bed of flowers.
So beautiful, so hush'd the scene,
It look'd as death had never been
Within this world of ours :
I sat—beside me in the grove
Smiled my first passion-flower of love.

We sat ~~within~~ a summer bower,
The pale and ~~balmy~~ air
Fell through the leaves, ~~like silver~~ shower
Upon her bosom bare,
Bathing her with its holy light.
We gazed at once to heaven through night,
Its thousand stars were there ;
And, looking on its marble brow,
We stood, and breathed our earliest vow.

These glorious moments seem'd to roll
As if ~~for us alone~~,
To sigh, and ~~converse soul to soul~~
While time look'd dreaming on ;
Methought the moon climb'd up the sky
Lighting the dull eternity
Which round our world was thrown,
As if to show our vow of love
Had found a welcome place above.

From her blue eye she raised the lid
As in my warm embrace,
And while one pearly tear-drop slid
She gazed upon my face.

Our hearts were sick, our breath was gone,
We stood like statues hewn in stone
Beneath the vault of space;
The moon went down,—our visions pass'd,
Our vow was spotless to the last.

The last wild pressure of thy hand,
Shall long remember'd be,
Thou seraph of a better land,
My spirit flies to thee !
The shaft of fate has broke our vow,
The oath we pledged is sever'd now,
Brief was thy bloom for me ;
The dew of youth scarce touch'd thy cup,
When death pass'd by and drank it up !

A MIDNIGHT IN GLENCOE.

It is needless to remind the reader that Glencoe, taken as a whole, is the wildest vale in Britain. The effect of its first view on my mind can never be worn away ; and though years have intervened, the appearance of any rent and rugged hill recalls all the rapture of my earliest visit to the Highlands, where with my friends, H. and M. Cameron, the happiest hours of my life were spent.

ON love and night ! let me go forth with thee,
Thou lovely moon, and hold converse with heaven,
When all is calm, as though the eye could see
Through the long vistas of the blue clouds riven
Up to the throne of God—a charm is given
From bright undying things, and I have grown
Part of their elements—the spells are living
Of solitary earth—she has a tone
Which my heart drinks and feels familiar with its own.

Thou look'st as Earthquake in his wandering
Had cool'd his fiery bosom in the snow
Of thy swart mountains, while the sable wing
Of death had brush'd them, and bade nothing grow

On their bald heads, where shifting to and fro
The avalanche has hung, like frozen locks
Over some giant's adamantine brow,
While Time has heap'd a thousand granite blocks
Like solitary cairns, to count the lightning's shocks.

This is the glorious wilderness, that speaks
With soul and sound of many a nameless brook ;
Around me are the huge unpeopled peaks,
Those high and icy solitudes, that look
The star-lights in the face ; from every nook,
Like lightning from their clouds, a thousand rills
Leap till the petrifying rocks are shook,
Laughing like madness up among the hills,
Those wild ones shout, till heaven each airy organ fills.

Splitting the drap'ry of the highest morns,
Thy peaks of granite plunge amid the day,
Glittering like icebergs with their cutting horns,
They look as Time had tried his first essay
On them, by sheering out a zigzag way,
Through which his harrikanes might ride alone,
And his sharp lightning like wild adders play
Among their everlasting spars of stone,
That vault thy black ravine, like arch by demons thrown.

Oh, now I sit upon the blue cliffs where
Art ne'er hath smooth'd the frown on nature's face ;
There is a grandeur in the desert air,
And on the rocks an old majestic grace.
This seems for freedom's foot the resting place ;
These are the wilds where she can spurn control,
And looking downward on man's slavish race,
Keep her white arm unshackled, and her soul
Free from the withering blasts that o'er creation roll.

Here, where the eagle dwells upon the cone,
The glittering cliff that mingles with the skies,
Here bled the injured brave of Caledon,
The fair-hair'd hunters of the hill ; the sighs
Of love rose wildly over sever'd ties ;
Yet, ye oppressors ! ye shall smart amain,
Your deeds on earth require eternities
Of punishment, to right the world again— [vain ?
When shall the dayspring dawn, when racks and cells are

The hour of retribution is at hand—
Eternal Spirit, grant its dawning near !
Awake, ye nations, and unsheath the brand ;
Freedom's first sunrays tinge the hemisphere—

Wake from the sleep of many a cloudy year,
Oppression o'er ye has usurped too long ;
Woe to earth's tyrants, when their dupes shall hear
The cry of freedom's sons ! Which is more strong—
The despot and his slaves—or they that suffer wrong ?

Time soon will tell, when millions at the dawn
Of glorious liberty once more will start,
When in the strength of truth their swords are drawn,
When the shaft quivers and the despots smart ;
The all-destroying brand, the venom'd dart
Which flattery sings from out its sheath, will shiver ;
The diamond grows in darkness—so the heart
Shall brighten 'mid its fetters—chains can never
Obscure the immortal spark—which yet shall shine for ever !

The nations know their strength ! they laugh to scorn
The old and rusty trammels of mankind ;
On slavery's starless night has dawn'd a morn
No thunder clouds can shadow ; who dare bind
The God that triumphs in the chainless mind ?
Ay—who shall crush him ? can a despot mar
That living essence to the Eternal join'd,
By slipping from their leash the dogs of war,
And rolling o'er the world on havoc's purple car ?

The truth has gone abroad, and who shall scare it?
Man is the child of freedom,—it hath told
That though the chain is forged, he should not wear it,
That the Eternal hath his name enroll'd
In nature's great equality—though sold
By his own fears and passions to the vain,
The ignoble tyrants, who are now grown bold
To barter men at pleasure, but the reign
Of the crazed despots end,—and earth laughs out again!

THE PERSECUTED.

A FRAGMENT.

Ask ye of Bothwell's bloody fight ?
'Tis vain : I saw it,—but my sight
Reel'd dizzy with the dreadful glare
Of lances, flashing in the air :
I only saw a troubled sea
Of helms and plumes,—and fearfully
The banners waving, broad and dun
Like thunder clouds beneath the sun ;
I only heard the shock, the shout,
The charge, the yell, the tug, the rout,
The awful struggle,—and the close,
The last embrace of writhing foes ;
I saw the rushing squadrons join,—
The bonnets blue, a glorious line,
The free-born warriors of the hill
Stand 'mid the charging whirlwind still,
Till freedom's last expiring groan
Rung from the brave of Caledon.

In that wild hour, beneath a shade,
I o'er my wounded husband pray'd ;
He lay, the fragment of his brand
Lock'd firmly in his icy hand ;
His helm was cleft, his forehead pale,
And on his breast the riven mail
Gleam'd redly to the stars, that shed
Their living glory o'er his head.

With love, that torture could not shake,
I join'd him at the fatal stake ;
It was a bright and summer day
When his free spirit pass'd away—
A beauteous moment fit to cast
The holy visions of the past
Around his lonely heart, and well
The martyr proved it ere he fell.
I saw him turn his glorious eye
A moment on the shining sky,
'Neath which his own blue uplands lay
Where we had spent love's happiest day,
As if the dream of early hours,
With all their waters, woods, and flowers,

Broke on his soul,—methought there slid
One tear-drop from his manly lid ;
But pride to stand, as he had stood
When grappling in the solitude,
Dash'd the brief drop that dared to creep
Across a shrine it durst not steep,—
I knew my warrior would not weep !
He died !—his latest look was bent
Up to his God.—A thrilling grace,
Unearthly though it was, had lent
A beauteous wildness to his face.
One grasp of his cold hand—a sigh—
One roll of his fix'd marble eye—
And his soul pass'd !—I scorn'd to groan,
Because our foes look'd coldly on ;
Tears would have slaked my spirit's thirst,
But not a single drop would burst.
I writhed—and gasp'd—a fiery note
Like death's sharp rattle fill'd my throat ;
A shiver curdled through my heart,
Follow'd by that unearthly start,
Which often in our dreams, like fire,
Shoots o'er the heart's electric wire.
But ah ! when the wild hour roll'd by,
When reason had resumed her mood,

My throbbing orbs, that long were dry,
Gush'd feelingly in solitude !

I've seen the lonely martyr gasp
His breath away—my friendly clasp
Has oped the vizor from his face ;
I've look'd upon his brow to trace
The latest streak of life, that brought
Its shadows o'er that dome of thought.
But oh ! more dreadful is the end,
The parting thus of friend with friend,
When on the stake, the manly heart
Departs—but not as warriors part.

'Tis strange we often note our time,
In this dark world of woe and crime,
From those keen griefs whose stormy sway
Sweeps all our lighter thoughts away.
Three sons were mine, as fair and bright
As ever bless'd a mother's sight.
One morn,—I'll ne'er forget,—the breeze,
Like laughing shower with playful din,
Fell up among the desert trees
That drank the living music in ;

The clouds were gather'd high in heaven,
So sweet the sunny haze was driven,
Athwart the Highlands far away,
It seem'd like the first sabbath day
Held by the earth's young shepherds—we,
My beautiful, my blooming three,
Were chanting in the mountain air
Their perish'd father's holy prayer ;
Though hunted for our faith divine,
The solitude had many a shrine
Where we could kneel, the fern our bed,
The dark sky all that arch'd our head,
The stars of God—the eyes that kept
A watch above us while we slept ;
Oft have we climb'd the misty height,
Where the goat sickens at the sight ;
Ours was the eagle's gory food ;
He fear'd to guard his callow brood
When our wild forms and hands impress'd
A moment's twilight on his nest.
But death had track'd my boys—the slave
Dug for my murder'd ones a grave,
Which late had been their father's tomb ;
And still his bones were wet and white—

I saw them shining in the gloom—
It was a maddening sight !
I felt the sickening stench ; oh God !
I shudder'd as they turn'd each sod ;
My brain spun round ; I could not eye
Such loved and dear mortality !
Oh thou sole Ruler in yon sky,
Stretch forth thy red right arm, and smite
Dark Clavers * in his hours of night !
Foul tyrant ! 'mid the starry air,
An eye beheld thee in thy pride ;
The mother's curse will meet thee there,—
The orphan's tears, like lava tide
Shall whelm thy perjured soul with dread !
Thy guilt—thy crimes are not forgiven ;
An empire's ban is on thy head ;
And the pure blood thine arm hath shed
Still cries " Revenge !" from heaven !

* Among all the blood-thirsty monsters, which the depraved and despotic government of Charles II. let loose to hunt down the virtuous peasantry of Scotland, no one is held in more detestation than Graham of Claverhouse—a wretch whose cold-blooded cruelty and oppression desolated the lovely straths and glens of the west, till they presented the awful picture of a land visited by the plague. Of late it has been fashionable to palliate the atrocities of this miserable pander to the wishes of a besotted administration ; but, all that genius has done—or can do—will be unable to divest the monster of his natural hideousness.

TO THE CLOUDS.

HAVE ye a dwelling, mighty shadows,—and
Are the cold stars your children?—or do ye,
When in your pride of place, your breasts expand,
Wither within yon dread immensity?
Are ye eternal—ever doom'd to be?
Or are ye but creations of an hour—
Bright phantoms floating o'er a shining sea,
Fleeting as time, and transient as the flower,
Expiring in your high and solitary power?

Are ye instinct with spirit, wandering ones?
Have ye a heart like man—and do ye weep
Those countless showers for earth's unguarded sons?
Or are ye selfish like the world, to keep
In your high lands—a palace where to sleep
Unwither'd by the storms that scour your path?
I deem ye such—I've seen your gather'd heap
Drifting away before the tempest's wrath,
Like cold and coward hearts that shrink and fly from death.

The sky is your eternity—the sun
Stands in its solitudes like God—and ye,
Weary and worn, like spirits one by one
Travelling from earth for judgment, silently
Come round his throne, in mourning, or in glee,
Ye lone way-faring fugitives of space !
Ye move unheeded o'er the sunny sea,
Like fortune's outcasts driven from place to place,
By the old famine winds, that glory in the chase.

Roll on, majestic shapes of glory, roll
Like a wild savage ocean o'er the sky !
Are ye the fleeting mansions of the soul,
Or are ye but the airy drapery
Flung round her pinions, as she soars on high ?
Oh ! ye are lovely in your loneliness,
Or in your strength, or when apart ye lie
Far up among the stars, or when ye kiss
And writhe like madness round each rugged precipice.

And ye are beautiful, when eye is still,
And, at the close of a bright summer day,
Ye hang in glory o'er some Highland hill
That sleeps amid the sunshine far away !

And when the moonbeams through your masses stray,
Ye look like marble pavement to some hall,
Some dome in which the fairy folk might play,
When the stars light them to their carnival,
And round their shining bowers the wings of twilight fall.

Vast curtains of the world ! ye often hide
The far and beauteous wonders of old night,
And like eternity when you divide,
Ye show a thousand unknown spheres of light ;
Space flashes then upon th' astonished sight,
With all its signs, and orbs, and stars sublime :
Oh ye unwearied travellers ! your flight
Is not confined to one lone shore or clime—
Your path is through all change, all seasons, and all time.

In vain the lightning flashes o'er your brow ;
Your dark majestic beauty closes round
The fiery furrows of his levelling plough,
And on your swarthy fronts no scar is found ;
The rattling hurricane can leave no wound,
Bright and eternal drapery of the sky !
In vain his sharp and sulphury arrows bound
Though ye a moment at his shout may fly,
Ye rally—charge,—and keep your battle ground on high!

How bright and beauteous are your curtains cast
Far o'er the forehead of the deep blue sea,
Hanging above th' immeasurable vast,
Like dim worlds floating in eternity,
So high, so solemn, so majestic—ye,
When suns have woven summer's showery arch,
Like conquering chiefs returning back in glee
With banners streaming in your pride, ye march
Through that triumphal span where lightnings dare not
perch !

And ye are oft like bowers,—in which the bliss
Of heaven was centred in the days of old ;
When, in your wheeling loveliness, ye kiss
The western ocean's blue and utmost fold ;
When the great sun looks through your rents of gold,
Like God on chaos, as on that far morn
When with his saints he hover'd to behold
The eternal veil of night asunder torn,
And the young laughing day amid the darkness born.

THE WIFE OF ASDRUBAL.

AFTER the destruction of Carthage, and the treachery of her husband, the wife of Asdrubal fled with a few survivors to an inaccessible temple, to which they set fire, and while it was burning—the heroic Amazon thus addressed the Roman commander :—" I call not down curses upon thy head, O Roman, for thou only takest the privileges allowed by the laws of war ; but may the gods of Carthage, and thou in concert with them, punish yon false wretch, who has betrayed his country, his gods, his wife, and his children !" Then addressing her husband :—" Basest of creatures ! this fire will presently consume me and my babes ; but thou, too shameful general of Carthage, go, adorn the gay triumph of thy conqueror, and suffer in the sight of all Rome the tortures which thou so justly deservest !" Having pronounced these words, she seized her children, and rushed with them into the flames, in which action she was imitated by all around her.— Vide ROLLIN.

CARTHAGE is level with her subject wave,
Her thousand palaces are but a grave ;
Her tribes have perish'd, and within her halls
No voice is left—no stone upon her walls—
No song of mirth—no beauty in her bowers—
No arm to smite,—not one within her towers
But death in silence sitting on each heap,
Yawning like labour when about to sleep ;

'Twas then, beneath the marble colonnade,
Of a high temple, firm and undismay'd,
The heroic mother stood and sternly smiled,
In either hand she held a lovely child,
Which look'd beside her dark majestic form
Like two calm sunbeams playing round a storm.
High curled the flames above her, and they threw
Athwart her face a more demoniac hue ;
Pale was her forehead, and her breast was bare,
And, all unfilleted, her raven hair
Stream'd o'er her bosom like a sable shroud.
Her naked arm is flashing 'mid the cloud
That swathes the temple in its solitude,
Where, like the Delphic prophetess, she stood,
Her lips apart—her heart with anguish riven—
Her spirit-breathing eyeballs turn'd to heaven,
As if to beckon vengeance to her rock.
They come—her dark eye brighten'd—as she spoke,
“ We blame ye not, O Romans ! but yon slave—
May the calm moon that gilds the peasant's grave
Bless not his ashes ! may his venom'd breath
Wither within some dungeon, and may death,
That brother of the broken-hearted, start
Each horror of perdition round his heart !

Oh god of Carthage, hear my burning prayer !
Storms, drink it not, but waft it through the air !
Descend, ye bright immortals, on the blast,
And 'gainst yon wretch your sharpest lightning cast—
Yon miserable wretch, who could betray
His country and his gods, to breathe a day,
To mark unwept his noble kindred's doom,
And crawl like loathsome reptile o'er their tomb !
Oh ! when yon traitor shuts in death his eye,
Bar 'gainst the demon's flight your glorious sky ;
May every dream and vision be a spell
To waft around his soul the fires of hell !
May false friends lure him ! May he never find
One wretch to share with him the load of mind !
Promethean-like, may sleepless vultures tear
His perjured heart doomed ever to despair ;
And may he, writhing 'neath the fiery chain,
Pray to his country's gods, but pray in vain !
Gaze, traitor ! on the patriots by my side—
These are the train that best befits thy bride ;
Gaze on thy children, but they are not thine,
No chain shall sully one sweet bud of mine.
I here bequeathe them to the gods—we die,
Free as our father's spirits in yon sky ;

We perish—but we sink in our own land
With not a fetter on one free-born hand.
Go, wretch ! exist, as vipers do—the scorn,
The blight of coming ages yet unborn !
May hope forsake thee at thy latest hour,
As thou hast done thy country ! and when lower
The clouds of death, oh, may thy memory rot—
A curse, a hissing, a reproach, a blot,
A thing to hate, a paragon of crime,
A shadow lowering on the page of time !
Go, wretch ! and live in other worlds ; and be
A fearful wanderer through eternity ;
A fiend whom even the deepest damn'd will shun,
And look upon thee as their foulest one !
Live in thy solitude, and in thy crime,
Till the last arrow of exhausted time
Is launch'd against the universe ; then fall,
And utter darkness be thy closing pall !”

THE SAILOR'S FUNERAL.

'Twas night—with the blue and boundless wave
The moonshine was sweetly blent,
As we lower'd that lone one to a grave
In his own wild element.
He had boldly battled the foe and wreck,
And his soul had ta'en wing in a cloudless sky ;
As we mournfully bore him along the deck
Tears sprang in the sternest eye.

His funeral dirge to the winds we sung,
While his dust on the deck remain'd ;
The standard of Britain above him hung—
A flag he had never stain'd !
No ! oft to the mast he had nail'd, unscared,
That flag when its friends were lying low,
As with cutlass he hew'd from its shiver'd yard
The ensign of the foe.

He was one for whom we well might grieve,—
Who nobly did possess

A heart to feel, and a hand to relieve
A brother in distress ;
And never were warmer hearts bent o'er
The dying or the dead,
Than those who crowded to grasp once more
The hand whose pulse was fled.

'Twas night—on the cold and sullen deep
A dull and desolate breeze
Came, like a troop of mourners, to weep
O'er his tomb in the lonely seas.
So clear was the blue of the wave, we saw
The print of each swarthy brow
That look'd o'er the rail of the ship with awe
To their friend in his braceings now.

A thousand lights were up in the sky,
And where their shadows lay,
Our comrade rock'd with each gusty sigh
On the deep and sheeted spray.
The green moonshine, and each icy star
That waded the depths of space,
Show'd many an old and honour'd scar
On his pale and marble face.

'Twas then that our thoughts began to stray
To his distant home, and the friends of his youth ;
To his black-eyed Sue, who in life's young day
Had pledged him her hand of truth.
One ripple in the cheerless sea—
One plunge—and our dreams are flown ;
Like a moment lost in eternity
The waves suck'd their burden down.

The dwellers of the deep shall play
Around his grave in many a crowd,
And sweep the fleshless bones away
From their cold oozy shroud.
But can the storm king on his cloud
E'er start him from his mansion chill ?
No ! Death, with voice more deep and loud,
Has said to all—Be still !

LAMECH, THE REGICIDE.*

A FRAGMENT.

One murder made a villain, millions a hero :
Princes were privileged to kill, and man
Sanction'd the deed.

PORTEOUS.

——— On his scathed brow

The lava passions of a maniac's soul
Were chisel'd out like marble ; and his eye,
Lowering and red like the volcano's torch,
Reveal'd the burning chaos of his brain.
He stood amid his tribes of fellow-men,
Like Lucifer when rising in high heaven,
And crying out, Rebel ! Upon his head
Rested that deep and ever damning weight—
A brother's murder ; and he moved like Cain,
A fugitive athwart the infant world.
He felt he stood in solitude, and shrank
From all that brought the dreams of happier days—
The blue sky, and the streams of living stars,
The glorious clouds in their high solitude,

From whose blue folds the round undying moon
Look'd like a spirit—all, as death-blast, broke
Upon his soul, and made her, adder like,
Coil inward, as if there alone he felt
Fit feelings to commune with. All his kin
Were the wild prowlers of the wilderness—
The tiger and the wolf, the herd that play'd
In horrid gambols round his giant tread,
And the huge mammoth, that like mountain roll'd
Among the pathless woods, the steed that oft
Bore him the monarch through the savage tribes
Of his wild empire ; but his favourites were
The clouds, those wanderers of the universe ;
For, oh ! they look'd upon their homeless way
Lonely, unheeded travellers like himself,
Moving unnoticed through the sunny world,
Dull shadows in its glory ;—he has stood
And gazed with rapture on those mighty ones,
Those lone wayfaring outcasts of the sky,
That had no shelter from the pitiless storms,
No parent's arm to shield them ; as he gazed
He cried to them as brothers, and whene'er
Their heaving breasts were wounded by the wing
Of some strong eagle, he has clench'd his hand

And cursed the far intruder. When old night
Laced on her turban, and, in regal pomp,
Shook her thick plumage in the face of heaven,
He loved to see the sick moon, and eclipse
Place his black fingers on her silver brow,
Blotting her beauty ; and he smiled to think
That stars were branded like himself, and felt
The pang of sorrow on their shining thrones.

A feast is spread in Enoch's lofty halls—
Enoch the hunter chief, earth's earliest king—
A gorgeous feast ! Amid a thousand shafts
Of rude and mighty columns, that arose
Like giant net-work in the vast saloon,
Fell the green moonshine, sliding from the dark
In dim magnificence along the walls,
Where hung the savage trophies of the chase,
Huge clubs, and knotty spears, and rugged skins,
Torn from the lion or the spotted pard
By the stern Cainites. In joyous mirth,
A thousand hunters of the desert sat,
The strong gigantic warriors of the hill,
And many a fair-hair'd daughter of the earth,
Fair as the flowers of Eden, blossom'd there—

The daughters of the fallen, love's first buds,
Their bright eyes and their shining tresses stream'd
Like glory o'er the banquet ; and their chiefs
Felt, though debarr'd from paradise, they still
Enjoy'd a portion of its happiness ;
And from the earliest vintage of the world
Drank till the spirit, in its dizziness,
Forgot the doom of man, or, heavier still,
The curse upon their own devoted tribe.

'Twas midnight ; and the round and rolling moon
Stood high among the nations of the stars.
Beneath her beam, amid the hunters sat
The solitary one—but sat as bronze,
With lip unchanging, and his hollow eye
Like the fierce lurid lightning in the night,
Betraying the wild tempest of his brain,
Where murder, like a spectre grim and gaunt,
Walk'd its remotest chambers.—Sleep descends.
The feast is ended ; and the monarch gives
A kind embrace to all but the accursed,
Who in his sullenness of spirit stood
Lowering within a marble niche, like death
In the green bowers of Eden. Midnight falls,

Oblivion's wing on earth—Who's by the couch
Of man's first ruler? Lamech the denounced!

The moon, like iceshine, green and luridly
Fell on the victim and the murderer;
Dreadful it was to see the demon bend,
To mark the blow out by the cold dead light,
And pace a moment backward from the couch
For strength to swing the life-destroying blade.
Now, now it glitters in the moon-lit air—
Now swift descending like a sunbeam sinks!
The mighty monarch burst his chains of sleep,
Wound, with a dying grasp, his desperate arms
Around his foeman's neck—awhile they strove
And fiercely panted in each other's face,
And every feature, in its last despair,
Seem'd like a statue's;—all was dark and wild;
The murderer and his victim, and the blade
Again aloft and quivering for the blow;
The struggling feet that beat the slabs; the arms
Cracking and twining in their sinewy strength,
And lock'd like serpents! Now the deed is done!
The sword again is buried in the king—
Oh! then there was a pause of all his powers,

And struggling life stood for a moment still ;
He heaved no dying groan, but firmly gripped
The throat of his destroyer—but strove none ;
He only pierced him with his glazing eye,
As if he long'd to curse him even in death.
Lamech soon flung the gory burden off ;
He now had vengeance, and his work was done !
Bearing the monarch's crown, he measured back
His pathway through the palace, whose vast halls
Yawn'd in their dimness round him, only lit
By a few weary starlights and the moon.

He fled—and from a mountain looking back
On the enormous city, he beheld
Her domes, and battlements, and pyramids,
And marble columns, that for multitude
Mock'd, in their giant nakedness, the ranks
Of alpine forests ; and he heard the curse—
A people's curse—peal'd after him ; it roll'd
Like thunder o'er the towers and palaces,
Swinging in all the depth, the strength, the power,
The might, the majesty of millions, who
Cursed the destroyer of an empire's hopes.
God spared the regicide, who wander'd on

Among those inland Asiatic peaks
That mock the clouds in their magnificent
Fantastic glory—shining in the air
A world of wavy cones, as if a sea
In savage grandeur had been turn'd at once
To marble, and had left its skeleton
Of billows petrified beneath the sun.
Now nature's doom was seal'd—the universe
Rock'd in its winding sheet—the living God
Had cursed her millions; and the clouds stood charged
With oceans in their wombs to strangle life.
Lamech roam'd on: it was the glorious noon
Of a deep, silent, solemn, summer day;
The sun had caught him in the wilderness,
And lull'd him into slumber;—he reposed
His giant limbs beneath a huge gray rock
Upon some ancient grave, and o'er his head
A solitary palm-tree waved, and sung
A melancholy ditty on the harp
Of the warm upland breeze. The dreamer lay
Hush'd as a child upon his mother earth.
The daylight sicken'd; and the evening wind
Started the sleeper. As he gazed around,
He shudder'd, for he knew the grave of Cain!

That heap had been his pillow—fitting couch
For the first regicide ! But, hark ! a roll !
The thunder has awaken'd—and the rain
Comes, as if God struck nature's harp, and crush'd
Its music out in one wild sound ; the waste
Drinks in its full, then rolls a shining sea ;
The beasts of prey scud o'er the sand, and scale
The jagged rocks, and millions of high birds
Descend upon the yet untrodden hills,
And darken the gray ice, which ne'er before
Was shadow'd by aught living. Now it groans
With earth's roused tribes—ay, the eternal frost
Cracks with the clinging hands and struggling feet
Of strong despair.

That savage wanderer—
Where scowl'd the demon, when he saw that death
Had mingled with the elements ?—He climb'd
A hoar volcano—'twas a dreadful sound
To hear the rain like cataracts rushing down
The roaring crater, and the cliffs of snow,
Which cased the fire like waves of alabaster,
Whirl'd in the belching flame with horrid hiss.
By that wild watchfire cower'd the lonely one,

Amid a throne of icicles, that look'd
The earliest labour of the polar storm,
Cold glittering pillars, pure and beautiful
As the blue moonbeams. On a fretted crag,
Like famine shivering in the selfish world,
Sat the pale shadow o'er the wreck, and keen
The tempest of the night descending smote,
With fierce and biting edge, his ashy cheek.
And now was heard the voice of the Most High
Rolling along the waters ; from the dark
The deep gigantic thunder bade the storm
Rush on to battle ; while the warrior winds
Sang to the vollied lightnings in their charge,
Sweeping the desert ; and the mighty rain
Came down like madness through the gather'd clouds,
Lashing their ranks to atoms ! Oh ! 'twas grand
And glorious confusion ! All the waste,
The fire, the hurricane, the winds and waves,
Seem'd then, and only then, to have received
A portion of their Maker's spirit ; and
A power, a feeling, and a glory, which
Gave life, magnificence, and harmony
To every portion of the universe.
The sky-dividing hills, the hoary crags,

Were whirl'd along the breakers, waste and wild.
Peak after peak, like sunbursts in a storm,
Went down amid the deluge ; and the seas,
The fierce and flashing oceans, thunder'd in
Like death betwixt their adamantine ribs ;
Their thousand forests wrench'd from their gray rocks
Went drifting on the waters ; like the limbs
Of perish'd nature, and high over all,
Wheel'd the blue storm, thro' which the lightning rush'd
Like demons eager to lay waste the world.
Creation was a wild and starless mass
Existing but in two immensities,
One whirling world of waters and one sky
That reel'd above the billows, and no bird
Swam in the strangling ether. That wild one,
When all his tribes were gather'd in the grave,
Had, with a miser's feeling, hoarded life ;
Long had he shiver'd on that horrid mount,
Watching with haggard eye its riven jaws
Belch forth the sulphury blaze, that day by day
Grew paler, till at last the fearful flame
Died in the hollow mountain ; still he kept
His seat upon the everlasting cliffs,
Till every living thing—the savage wolf,

The pard, the lion, and the tiger—lay
Lifeless around his solitary tread ;
And rustling through the cold and scatter'd clouds,
The latest wanderer had come whirling down,
And gasp'd away its spirit at his feet.
All perish'd, leaving that devoted one
The ghastly monarch of the silent earth ;
And then he stood aloft upon his throne
Of icy desolation ; gazing o'er
The muttering, melancholy waves, that swept
O'er every mountain's forehead, islanding
The peak where stood the solitary, lone
As God above the elements, ere light
Rose at his mighty word. As thus he gazed,
A carcase floated past, Promethean-like,
With strong gigantic limbs that heaved along
The deep in horrid mockery of life,
And, pinch'd with hunger, on its bosom sat
A famish'd vulture, feasting at her full,
And ever and anon with heavy wings
Flapping the dead—and Lamech crawling look'd
Over the beetling crag, as hurried past
The ghastly form and its inhabitant,
And laugh'd in frenzied joy. The reveller,

Roused from her meal with that unnatural laugh,
Eyed the intruder with a look that said,
Man is not monarch now ;—then struck her beak
In the cold dead, and wildly whirl'd away
Over the sea, whose mountainous billows shriek'd
The dirge of a past world. The regicide
Now, as in mockery of earth's kings, put on
The crown of Enoch—but it suited not
His wasted forehead—yet he proudly stood
Sublime 'mid desolation, with his arm
Stretch'd out in lank and ghastly majesty,
Holding the only sceptre in the world.
Then laugh'd the skeleton, and stretch'd his jaws
In wild derision at the pomp of kings.
Where were those mighty ones, whose fiat strew'd
The earth with carcases—whose voices spoke
Like the loud trumpet, and bade havoc rage
Unfetter'd 'mid their tribes—whose armies hid
Whole empires in their glory?—They were gone.—
Those wild annihilators of mankind—
Those sceptred pests of frail humanity,
Lay crownless 'mid their slaves ; no one to show
Where those leviathans that swam in blood
Wither'd unknown ; that solitary one

Now wore the only crown ; no one remain'd
To pluck it from his brow ; he stood amidst
His lifeless kingdoms, and his hosts the dead,
With visage like the grey expiring moon
Seen in the blue of morning—then he sunk
Smote by the levelling hurricane,—as fell
The fiery deluge down, the wanderer lay,
His head upon a glacier's splinter, which
The cutting lightning had in passing cleft,
And from his frozen pillow he upturn'd
A dull dilated eye to the black storm ;
Then thought he on a dream of his young days,
When he was drunk with love ; a tender girl
Who was the pole-star of his soul—but set
When blushing into beauteous womanhood—
A gentle rosebud, opening to the sun
Of her twelfth summer ; but the vision pass'd
Amid the shriek of tempests. Far away
A dim high-floating creature caught his gaze,
One hoary ranger of the feather'd tribe,
One lonely eagle—the last wanderer
Of all his kin of blood. He gazed and saw
The gory shadow whoop and hover round,
And wheel, and shriek, and staggering flap his wings,

Drunk with the tempest—till at last he fell
Sheer through the groaning clouds, and at his side
With fluttering pinions vainly beat the ground.
Now all were wash'd from their high sepulchres,
All but that giant maniac and his mate.
He lay upon the ice ; beside him cower'd
The dying eagle—and the setting sun,
Like hope forsaking the devoted world,
Rose o'er the mighty waters ; one wild arch
Of beams and lightning, like the bridge of death,
Spann'd the cold battlements of that last cliff,
And flung one glimmer o'er them. Lamech's gaze,
And the dim eye-ball of the shivering bird,
Were all the orbs in the doom'd universe
That drank his parting glory ! Fierce and thick
Gather'd the tempest ; one unearthly gleam
Has flash'd—has died ; and on the shoreless sea
Blackness sinks down for ever—all is waste—
No sun—no moon—no murmur but the storm—
And the lone shadows of the monstrous clouds,
Stretching for leagues and darkening the deep.
Time, that old shadow on earth's dial stone,
Shifted unheeded—there were none to mark
The phantom stealing o'er creation's grave.

THE DEAD BOA.

HER dwelling was a cave, where Time
Might have received his birth ;
So dark, so silent, and sublime,
It look'd more old than earth.
Parch'd by the burning star of day,
Around wild, waste, and grand,
A thousand leagues—away—away,
Stretch'd one wide world of sand.

Nought stirr'd the thick and blistering air,
Nought broke the dazzling sheen,
That fell on nature's forehead, where
Ne'er bloom'd one spot of green ;
Silence in dreamlike glory stood,
The monarch of the ghastly clime,
Far sleeping o'er that solitude,
Where nothing moved but time.

Gaunt snake ! there thou hast made thy den,
'Mid groves with every horror rife,

Lurking unseen, like Satan when

He smote the tree of life.

Thou didst not fear the tiger's fangs,

The stately buffalo,

The panther, in his fiercest pangs,

To thee was scarce a foe.

If e'er he sprung against thee, thou

Didst meet him in his wild array,

Whirling him, as thou would'st the bough

From some old tree away.

The dusky lion that did walk

Alone beneath the sky,

Beheld thee through his forest stalk,

But let thee pass him by !

He durst not in his strength be found

Disputing thy command ;

The thunder of thy giant bound

Had crush'd him in the sand.

Yet thou hast droop'd :—o'er thee the blast

Of solitude is darkly shed :

None needs to mark thy grave ; thou hast

For shroud thy thousand dead.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

ARE ye unholy shadows, that by fits
Start from your grave, and in your shining shrouds
Walk those high wastes, where desolation sits
Nursing the dreamer silence, 'mid the floods
And snow of centuries, and savage crowds
Of peaks, that cut with their sharp scythes of ice
The dusky myriads of the charging clouds
Led by the giant storm, whose fiery voice
Cries, Gather,—and rush on, the seas beneath rejoice !

Wild phantoms of the dark, from height to height
Fresh leaping into being now, and lost—
Ye look like drunkards dancing through the night
And reeling o'er the slippery crags of frost,
Those snowy deserts bird has never cross'd,
Those frozen cataracts,—those floods of stone,
Which in their hoar sublimity are toss'd
Down on the Esquimaux, who sinks alone [zone.
Beneath those worlds of ice when spring unbinds their

Your mirror is those everlasting spars
Of stainless frost brush'd by the whirlwind bare,
Shooting like glory up among the stars,
Ye flash like moonlight on perdition ; there
Ye've plough'd for centuries the fetter'd air,
Like Satan struggling over chaos—well
That savage region, where death makes his lair,
Might seem the monstrous billows of deep hell,
Frozen in their wildest roll by some almighty spell.

Ye leap in glory o'er those masses—ay,
In mute and dread magnificence, but none
Can mark your path of beauty in the sky,
Amid those crystal crags life never shone.
The whale, in storm and darkness dashing on,
The polar bear amid her howling brood,
The gaunt wolf gasping his expiring groan,
Are all the kin of your cold solitude, [blood.
Where silence stands in dread—as death had chill'd his

The feeble pinions of the cheerless hour
Can bring no change within thy ghastly realm ;
The sickly sunbeam in its short-lived power
Strikes vainly on the cliff's majestic helm ;
The muttering hoar-frost soon can overwhelm

The struggling day-star—winter in his cloud,
With his sharp icy fingers, does embalm
The haggard form of nature in her shroud, [bow'd-
Whose features, turn'd to stone, remain when states have

Methinks the first sad solitary bark
That, like a pilgrim, cross'd the frozen deep,
Whose stony floods were fetter'd in the dark,
Felt hope descending 'mid the horrid sleep
That gather'd o'er the elements—they'd keep
Their fond eyes fix'd upon the stainless blue
Of the chill sky, that bound each rolling heap,
And, as along the ice thy streamers flew,
Oh! they have knelt to thee, how lonely—yet how true!

When in his cloudy chariot, icy death
Rattled above them through the frozen scars
Of the sharp icebergs, whose destroying breath
Glued them like statues to their deck, thy bars,
Shooting athwart the Highlands of the stars,—
Oh! they have bless'd—that momentary blaze
Which flashing on the desert's thousand spars,
Like hope upon despair, such beauteous rays
Which wafted warmly back the dreams of their young
days.

Your realm is in that cold and frozen clime
Where ruin and old silence holdeth sway ;
Where winter's breath has glued the wings of time
Like marble to the wizard's shoulders grey ;
Where Hecla, like hell's altar, flames for aye,
His red plume plunging in the sunless heaven,
Lit by old earthquake, shining 'neath his ray
A vast eternity of glaciers riven
Gleam through the fetter'd air, like the last flush of even.

Fear walks a shadow o'er the horrid coast,
With finger on her lip and cloudy eye,
While death sits darkly on his throne of frost,
Waving his icy sceptre through the sky,
His tresses are the thunder storms that fly
In dread sublimity along the deep,
When in their caves the savage monsters die,
And the old glaciers, roused from years of sleep,
Crush the enormous whale, while in her maddest leap !

THE INDIAN'S GRAVE.

IN the United States, and in the very centre of cultivated fields, may be traced the graves of the ancient inhabitants of America. Many of those green heaps must have remained without a tenant for centuries, and though now distant a thousand miles from the deserts, where the last remnants of the Indians are permitted to live, yet, to this very day, may be seen lone and weary pilgrims sitting in the sunshine of an Autumn evening on the graves of their fathers, after having traversed whole states to reach the melancholy spot, and there indulge in a brief dream of their departed greatness, and of those far times when they were alone the possessors, and not the outcasts of the continent. The following Poem represents one of those men of the wilderness, after having crossed the vast lakes and wilds of Canada, imploring a Virginia planter for the use of the neglected grave of his kindred, in which to bury his father.

CHRISTIAN ! I heard my father say,
Upon his dying bed,
That many a hundred leagues away
Reposed his nation's dead ;
And ere his spirit sank to rest,
His dim eye glisten'd on the west.

It was not that the sun stood there
In robes of sparkling glow,

Though he had often knelt in prayer
To that bright god—ah, no !
His golden smiles had not the power
To soothe him at his latest hour.

It was the thought, which could not melt
In life's last agony,
Of scenes where once his sires had dwelt
Before you cross'd the sea,
And memory's spirit, not subdued,
Pointed to this far solitude.

He said he wish'd to wither here.
He died :—I slung my bow,
And travell'd many a desert drear,
Though worn and weary now.
I scour'd the forest and the brake,
I swam the stream, and cross'd the lake.

Here lived my sires, and here they lie,
Here rose the battle's din ;—
Think'st thou that corn and wine can buy
The ashes of my kin ?
Nay, do not tell me thou hast sown
Thy treasures o'er each wither'd bone ;

That mansion is the dead's—'tis mine ;

Each low unhonoured head

Loved the blue sky, then let it shine

Upon their humble bed !

The sun, that cheer'd them on the hill,

Oh ! let it beam above them still !

Thou hast the plain—there dig and sow,

There let thy harvests wave ;

But the wild desert flowers must grow

Upon my kindred's grave ;

The peace-tree withers on its stalk—

But who unsheath'd the tomahawk ?

Why did you leave your land of birth

Beneath your native sky ?

Oh ! was there not enough of earth

Where you and yours might die—

No homes where young affection dwelt—

No graves where love and faith have knelt ?

Enough ! thou know'st we once were free ;

Those sunny hours are past,

An outcast wanderer begs of thee

A grave to rest at last ;

Plant on it—spurn this poor request,
And death's last curse shall with thee rest.

Stranger ! my father's ghosts are strong,
Swift, as the lightning streams
Athwart the clouds, they rush along
From the dim land of dreams.
I'll pray to them, as by they roll
To fix their red shafts in thy soul !

They'll hurl the fierce destroying blast
Upon thy blooming bowers,
And the dark earthquake's shadow cast
Around thy haughty towers ;
On the black hurricane they'll tread,
And flap its blue wings o'er thy head !

But if thou grant'st my sire a home,
The star of peace will shine,
And hope will blossom round thy dome,
And every joy be thine.
Oh ! 'tis not much, for child to crave
One spot to dig a father's grave !

THE FIRST SHIP.

The sky in beauty arch'd
The wide and weltering flood,
While the winds in triumph march'd
Through their pathless solitude,
Rousing up the plume on ocean's hoary crest,
That like space in darkness slept,
When his watch old silence kept,
Ere the earliest planet leapt
From its breast.

A speck is on the deeps,
Like a spirit in her flight ;
How beautiful she keeps
Her stately path in light !
She sweeps the shining wilderness in glee.
The sun has on her smiled,
And the waves, no longer wild,
Sing in glory round that child
Of the sea.

'Twas at the set of sun
That she tilted o'er the flood,
Moving like God alone
O'er the glorious solitude,
The billows crouch around her as her slaves.
How exulting are her crew,
Each sight to them is new,
As they sweep along the blue
Of the waves.

Fair herald of the fleets
That yet shall cross the wave,
Till the earth with ocean meets
One universal grave,
What armaments shall follow thee in joy !
Linking each distant land
With trade's harmonious band,
Or bearing havoc's brand
To destroy !

TO THE COMET.

MYSTERIOUS Visitant ! through those high seas
Where stars and moons are islands, dost thou go !
Hast thou a charm upon our destinies,
To weave the tissue of our joy or woe ?
Hast thou a rein to curb our fates below ?
Oh ! art thou, in thy dark volcanic car,
To earth's weak wandering multitudes a foe ?
And dost thou yoke the steeds of guilt and war,
And bid the demons lash their winged pests afar ?

From Time's far childhood to this living hour,
When he has grown a dotard, men have deem'd
That in thy wandering thou didst bear the power
To change their fortunes ; earth's old tribes have seem'd
Spell-bound in terror, when thy banners gleam'd,
Red galley of a dim and boundless deep !
Thou dost not stray, though night has round thee dream'd
From grey eternity—no, thou dost keep
Thy free and fearless path, where all is death or sleep.

Thou'rt said to prophesy to mankind shrouds—
To empires desolation and decay,
When, in thy wide pavilion of the clouds,
Thou stand'st like death on nature's dying day,
Filling her millions with a mute dismay ;
Blue ghastly pestilence is of thy kin,
Earthquake in his annihilating play,
And haggart famine with green shrivel'd skin,
Woe, war, and fell despair, and all the brood of sin.

The sun, the troops of stars which storms disperse
Among the clouds, have one predestined path ;
But thou, wild ranger of the universe !
Hast nought to bind thee ; in thy hours of wrath,
When tempests ope their cloudy lips and breathe
Destruction o'er creation, orbs may die,
Launch'd into darkness by the hand of death ;
But thou, great messenger of the Most High !
Stand'st, as thou still hast stood, when ruin thunders by.

Thou dost depart, and visit other spheres ;
When centuries have pass'd—thou comest again ;
Yet on thy brow we trace no shade of years ;
Death has been stranger in the lone domain
Where thou hast been sojourning—all in vain

Earth's sons have eyed thee in thy mansion' chill ;
In vain the Persian made his hallow'd fane
The snowy scalp of the cloud-mingling hill ;
He saw thee in the sky—but all was mystery still.

When nature from the hoary deep was reft,
And sprang triumphant in her youthful might,
Thou wert perchance the earliest star that cleft
A pathway through the dark for rosy light
To follow thee upon its jocund flight ;
Thou wert the messenger, the Godhead sent
To lead old chaos to his caves of night,
Where mercy fetter'd him, till love had blent
His spirit with his waves, and form'd the firmament.

Thou wert a wonder to the world gone by ;
Thou wert the star that stood with fiery gleam,
Waving thy flag of promise in the sky,
Which cheer'd the wise of old by Ganges' stream ;
And thou didst lead them with thy magic beam
Through the blue hills of Ind, until they saw
Their God and Saviour in a holy dream ;
And thou didst stand above his couch of straw,
Fit coronet for Him who gave creation law !

The planets wither in the depth of night ;
When years descend and make their glory grey,
'Tis said thou fill'st their empty arms with light ;
Gathering afar each lone and wandering ray,
Thou comest exulting with the robes of day,
To wrap around the dim dismantled sun,
Thou drinkest in the morning on thy way,
And, with his blazing torch light, thou dost run
To light the dying shrine of heaven's divinest One.

And thou, perchance, mayst be the mighty scourge
Who yet shall shrivel up the wings of time,
And in thy dark destroying glory urge
Our planet, scar'd by sorrow, age, and crime,
Over the brink of being, to that clime
Where death with ruin'd orbs his mansion decks,
And thou mayst suck into thy wrath sublime
The stars, which will but seem as little specks
Beneath thy fiery wings, which lasheth them to wrecks.

THE BAPTISM.

I SAW them in the house of God
Lie smiling side by side ;
I heard the thrilling prayer that flow'd,
And bless'd a mother's pride.
It pass'd—some boyish years roll'd on
Of sorrow and of mirth ;
Closed is life's page !—they now have gone
From off the laughing earth.

And where are they ? ay, gaze around ;
Their little cot still moulders there ;
But ask where may its flowers be found—
And silence answers, Where ?
Oppress'd they sought, fair hope, with thee
Those western worlds beyond the wave ;
Their mother died,—the yawning sea
Was the old wanderer's grave.

She bless'd them ere she died ; they knelt
Together side by side,
And o'er their throbbing hearts they felt
Her cold hand slowly glide.

The sea breeze raised her hoary hair,
Death spread his dark eclipse ;
Her last breath was a mother's prayer,
Pour'd from a mother's lips.

Her boys beheld her corse depart ;
They saw the waters o'er it driven ;
And, in the bitterness of heart,
Their prayers were peal'd to heaven.
But soon they raised each drooping eye
From where the cheerless waves did roll ;
Faith pointed to the mighty sky,
The mansion of the soul.

Beneath misfortune's baneful spell
The brothers soon were doom'd to part ;
They kiss'd—they wept the word farewell,
In brokenness of heart.
They breathed their perish'd mother's name,
The moment they were doom'd to sever ;
They shed some blighting drops of flame,
And parted then for ever.

In the far deserts of the east
The eldest heaved his latest sigh ;

The vultures hurried to a feast—

His bones bleach 'neath the sky ;

The tiger nears them in his scent,

The swarthy Indian sees them rot,

The Tartar rears his snow-white tent

Above, but heeds them not.

In dark Canadian forests, one

Sleeps in those solitudes of gloom ;

A naked chieftain of his clan

O'er him has raised a tomb.

For oh ! he had a generous soul,

And ere his weary toils did cease,

He quaff'd with him the friendly bowl,

And smoked his pipe of peace.

Now rests he by those inland seas

Where the wild panthers play,

And twilight, 'mid the ancient trees,

Flings darkness o'er the day.

Thus they are parted in their sleep

Who prattled o'er one kindred sod ;

The grave its prisoners cannot keep,

They'll rise when the wide waste and deep

Yawns to the voice of God.

THE FIRST SOUND FROM EARTH.

A SERAPH, whose mission had led him afar
To the bounds of creation, home winging his flight,
In his wanderings travelled by many a star,
Fair children within their dark cradles of night ;
With wonder he gazed on that beautiful race,
So young in their childhood—so glad in their shout ;
When last he had wing'd these black regions of space,
Not an orb in its glory was playing about.

The Eternal had spoken, and numberless spheres
Now boom'd through the ether in radiant crowds ;
Their God had forbade them to wither with years,
And had hung them aloft in their theatre of clouds.
Each sang in delight on its radiant throne,
Each roll'd on in sunshine undimm'd by a tear ;
But hark ! 'mid their anthems of gladness, a groan
From a young planet floats on the wanderer's ear.

With wonder the seraph bore down on his path,
Till over the breast of that beautiful star ;

'Twas earth ; and that shriek had arisen, when death
O'er his earliest victim stood shouting afar.

That groan space has echo'd, shall never be still,

Till time fold his last wither'd pinions below ;

Each bosom shall suffer, each spirit shall thrill,

And each moment be clogg'd with that matin of woe.

TO EARTHQUAKE.

METHINKS that thou wert cradled on the cliffs
Of the grey Alps, which through the clouds expand
Those billowy peaks, that eagle never skiffs ;
Where hoary winter takes his lasting stand,
The shining avalanche within his hand ;
Where burst a thousand cataracts, like fire
Lighting a horrid labyrinth to the damn'd,
Where the mad surges boil, and hiss, nor tire,
But with their dizzying roar fill the almighty choir.

There on those jagged crags where whirlwinds lounge,
Which look like one almighty sea of storms,
Frozen to marble in its wildest plunge,
Where hangs the hurricane his fiercest forms,
And where the lightning in its glory charms
The mighty spirit of the thunder cloud ;
Methinks old Time first leapt into thine arms,
And thou didst straight conceive, and yelling loud
Whelp'd shaggy Ruin forth—while rushing in a crowd

Came storm, and darkness, rolling o'er the hill,
And tempest whistling far away—and fast
The cutting lightning, blue and beautiful,
Ran sheering through the plumage of the blast;
And the big thunder rattled long and vast,
And mist, and rain, and many a cloudlet torn,
And giant Death, the mightiest and the last,
All rush'd to gaze upon thine earliest born, [morn.
Spawn'd on the shatter'd rocks, whose foreheads hid the

Those thousand constellations that appear,
Floating like islands in a shining sea—
Oh! did they form in some far nameless year
One splendid and unmarr'd infinity?—
One glorious world, from every blemish free,
Where pleasure was not fading like the grass?
Oh! was its bosom first plough'd up by thee,
Didst thou and rampant Ruin rise, alas!
And o'er the deep profound, shatter that orb like glass?

Scattering its broken wrecks, like icy spars
Along the bosom of the wasteful deep,
Those rent and shining wrecks, which are the stars
Which gather up in heaven when mortals sleep.

And didst thou like a levelling tempest sweep,
Ploughing its surface to a thousand waves,
Till in thy strength thou wert sent down to keep
Thy dull dominion in earth's lowest caves,
There to dig out, in gloom for towns and empires, graves?

Soon as thou didst alight upon the earth,
Thou left'st those frozen crags, and flew afar
To the black mountain urns, and brought to birth
The blighting flame of elemental war ;
Then blazed the young volcano on her car
Of clouds and sulphury vapours ; stirr'd by thee
Its smother'd ashes rose anew to mar
Infant creation in her hours of glee,
Then reel'd whole continents, as earth was but one sea !

And thou didst tear the barriers of the deep,
Whirling the drunk earth from her children's tread,
And cried to ocean, who with dreadful sweep
Wash'd them in millions to his oozy bed ;
And thy black wings o'er all shall yet be spread ;
Annihilating spirit ! thou shalt rise,
Walk in thy strength, and who shall strike thee dead

But He whose fiat form'd thee in the skies,
And sent thee down through space o'er earth to tyrannize?

The city hears thy cloudy chargers champ
Above her temples in the deep midnight ;
And thousands, crush'd to ashes 'neath thy tramp,
Proclaim thy triumph with the morning light ;
The towers that mock'd the pale stars in their height,
The marble domes, the wonder of the land,
Like frost-work melting in the noonday's might,
Vanish beneath the pressure of thy hand, [stand.
And Death himself amazed yawns where they once did

And thou dost prompt the fiery Hurricane
To shrivel up the sky—and thou dost hold
The Ocean by the blue and ruffled mane
A moment—then, like war-horse rushing bold,
Thou drivest him o'er the strand, where he has roll'd
And aided thee in thy wild war on man.
Earth is instinct with spirit—she is old—
Why torture her, ye mighty pests ! who can
Blot stars ?—why war with us, whose lives are but a span ?

A SHIP RUN DOWN AT SEA.

SHE swung before us like a cloud
Along the breakers blue ;
One maddening shriek—oh God, so loud !—
Rose from her sinking crew.
I saw her mighty shadow cast
Athwart our reeling bark
One moment,—o'er her hulk we pass'd,—
And all was hush'd and dark !

I heard the hiss of the black wave
In which she staggering sank ;
I heard the prayer her sailors gave
As death's wild cup they drank.
One rush of sails, as on we bore
Above her through the gloom,
And crash of timbers, like the roar
Of thunder, spoke her doom.

On swept our strong but stagger'd bark,
Stunn'd by the awful shock,
When from the curtains of the dark
The ghastly moonshine broke.

Away we swept before the storm ;
I gazed upon the wave,
But all, save one fair floating form,
Had found a darksome grave.

The surge, around her boiling white,
Soon lost its crest of blue ;
When o'er it, in his swarthy flight,
The storm's red spirit flew.
Cursed be the blast that drives us on
Across the waters wild !
Oh mercy, heaven ! that helpless one
Has in her arms a child !

Like dungeon roof, the billows hung,
Through which the red moon's ray,
In wild and lurid streaks, was flung
Along the emerald spray.
I saw her in that fitful glance,
But we were sweeping by—
We could not save :—I mark'd but once
On us she bent her eye.

Her cheek was like the marble, wet
With the devouring brine,

And on her long loose locks of jet
 Glitter'd the cold moonshine.
No shriek came from her ashy lips ;
 She drifts with starting eye,
As if through nature's last eclipse
 She saw her God on high.

The moonbeams caught her straining gaze
 While flashing on the main,
She slowly raised her faded face
 Towards that starry plain ;
She heeded not the billow's roll
 Around her darkly driven,
Her all was in her arms,—her soul
 Yearn'd for its native heaven.

The waves are rippling to her lip ;
 She shrieks—she gasps—she sinks ;
Yet still she holds her treasure up
 Till the dark cup she drinks.
'Tis done !—she reels—her raven hair
 Floats on the waters wild,
And her last gurgle was a prayer
 Gasp'd o'er her drowning child !

LETHE.

The spider has woven his web in the imperial palace ; and
The owl hath sung her watch-song on the towers of Afrasiab.

DISTICH OF PERSIAN POETRY.

A DEAD and melancholy stream, that flows
From a black gulf where nature has expired ;
A dull expanse of ever-sleeping waves,
Hush'd by the broad wings of the silent night,
In their rude cradle of untrodden cliffs,
Where life looks lull'd into a frozen trance,
And the sharp cutting precipices stand,
Wedging the mute and stagnant atmosphere
Among the ribs of their fantastic peaks.
Time dozes 'mid the ruins ; solitude
Has clipp'd the wizard's wings, and dug his grave,
And o'er his urn oblivion's waters roll.
How silent is their current ! not more smooth
The airy visions of a summer slumber
Stealing along the brain, though in it lie
Ambition, pride, the travail, and the toil,
The pomp, the splendour, and the majesty,
The monuments, the sepulchres, the thrones,

The hopes, the fears, the joys, the sufferings,
The tears, the smiles, the passions, and the pains,
The thoughts, the labour, and the lumber—all
The spoil of time, the triumph of the grave,
And earth's unnumber'd millions—yet how mute
That river with its burden steals along !
No billow whispering of the perish'd—nought
Giving an echo of the multitudes
Down drifting with its deluge ! All is still,
Silent, and dark, and dread, and hush'd as fear
Amid a wilderness ; the crags are zoned
With black eternal woods, that never wave,
But seem a forest petrified to stone,
Throned 'mid their realms of ice—they look as old
As nature ; and like cloud on cloud, when spins
A whirlwind o'er the ocean, they uprear
Their shaggy crests line over line above
Their battlements of granite, whose blue scalps
And fractured ridges break the highest heaven.
Throughout their savage vistas, yawning huge,
Which the dull twilight renders visible,
Appear the ghastly wrecks—the skeletons
Of old enormous cities—monuments
Lost with their tribes and builders in the dark,

A thousand Ninevehs, where Ruin mourns
That nothing stands to level ; hoary heaps
Rear'd in creation's morning, they have sunk
With all their glory to the sepulchre.
Yet there life's tragedy has been ; and Hope
Has died beneath her elder brother Fear ;
And Fortune, with her frost work wreaths, and Fraud
Have lured the millions with the words of truth,
Hollow and spiritless ; and bastard Love,
The world's stale commerce bought and sold for price,
Hath wanton'd heartless as the summer moth ;
And Mercy pinionless, and Pity chain'd
With hearts of stone have shiver'd by the side
Of Justice, who has stood, as still she stands,
Holding her balance in this selfish world,
Blindfolded to the friendless and the poor.
Spirit of nature ! not the smallest shade,
Which wing'st thy mighty throne, but carries change
To what is perishing ; and hours, and days,
And years, and centuries, like the winter blast
Sweeps from the tree of life perpetual showers
Of buds and blossoms—there all speaks decay,
And Mirth is petrified, and Joy is left
A statue in the twilight of the past ;

And Sorrow on the lap of Silence sleeps
Her cares away, nor feels a heartache more ;
Even Death, the trampler, is but a dream,
A fearful shadow that once flutter'd o'er
The mansions of the perish'd, and disturb'd
A little moment their inhabitants,
And then was gone for ever—all are mute.
The mighty giants, children of the east,
Who walk'd in glory on the mountains, ere
Death cut his harvests yearly, now are gone.
Around them all is horribly still ;
Eternal cliffs, that o'er each other hang
Toppling in high and steadfast ruggedness,
As if to crush with one gigantic plunge
The clouds that cower a moment 'neath their frown ;
Hoar crags that look like halls, where Time first taught
Earthquake and Ruin, his firstborn, to work ;
Fear sits upon the peaks, whose monstrous horns
Mix in the frozen atmosphere ; the wind
Ne'er startles the old sleepers ; all are hush'd ;
The shadow Sorrow, and the fiend Despair,
Death the pale spectre, and the serpent Sin,
With all her thousand furies, are not there ;
They lie not with the perish'd—they are up

And busy on the mad old whirling world,
Weaving their web of discord in the dark,
Sapping the lone unguarded tree of life
That stands, and wavers o'er the flood of night,
Smote by each storm that sweeps the universe,
Shakes ever and anon its million buds
Down the mute waters of forgetfulness ;
Ay, the grey world, like mighty theatre, gapes
With spacious stage ; on which the actor Man
May strut his hour in the great play of life,
Joy, fight, exult, droop, sorrow, weep, and die !
While Death, o'er all the battle and the broil,
The hopes, the fears, the strange vicissitudes,
The pride, the tyranny, the hate, the scorn,
The spoils, the triumphs, and the armaments,
The funerals, the armies, and the pomp,
The boards, the banquets, and the luxury,
The cottages, the palaces, the domes,
The monuments, the gibbets, and the chains,
The mirth, the smiles, the sorrow, and the tears,
The hoods, the mitres, sepulchres, and thrones,
The dungeons, and the scaffolds of the earth,
Drops from his chamber of oblivion
The curtain of the dark,—and shuts the scene !

THE INVITATION.

A FAMISH'D vulture gasping lay
His life in solitude away,
His savage gaze, now vainly bent
Upon the burning firmament,
Reveal'd a murderous spirit spent.
He lay and shiver'd—when on high
A rush of pinions through the sky
Made the hoar drooper lift his eye.
One of his kin approach'd, who spoke :—
“ Arouse thee, brother ! from thy rock ;
I've bent to thee my gladsome flight
From a far glorious land last night,
Where liberty, in darkness nursed,
That lightning of the world has burst
O'er man—and blood shall quench thy thirst !”
The dreamer eyed the desert dim,
Where oft a meal had greeted him
Of ghastly head and quivering limb ;
And murmur'd, “ Nay—for, one by one,
Last eve I saw a caravan

Move o'er the sand in splendid row,
Ten thousand turban'd heads like snow
Dotted the desert—from my rock
I saw the rich unharnessed cars,
While o'er their weary slumbers broke
The blue night and a thousand stars.
Each eye was closed ; but as they lay,
I snuff'd the simoom far away.
On came the cloudy giant—thou
May'st mark their corpses on the brow
Of yon red waste—oh, had I still
My strength of wing, I'd feast my fill !”

“ Old warrior ! is thy knowledge gone
To choose one festering skeleton,
For the fresh victims that will be
Slain ere the setting sun for me ?
In yon dim sea lie flowery lands,
And one enormous city stands,
Whose domes, and towers, and many a shrine ..
As high as our old eyries shine
Along the bosom of the air ;
But slaughter, vengeance, and despair
Keep their wild court in darkness there ;

And in that capital, a thing
Whom millions long have named a king,
Because his dupes will not be slaves,
Has fill'd his bleeding land with graves ;
And fetter'd man, no longer mute,
Has pluck'd the fair forbidden fruit
From freedom's tree,—while fire, and death,
And hoary desolation, hath,
'Mid crimson oceans, ta'en their stand,
With red annihilating hand,
Shaking the reins of guilt and slaughter,
Till hate amazed looks silent after
Their steeds that gallop through the fight.
The words, Religion—Freedom—Right,—
Have spread for me a gorgeous room,
And at the last, blue plague has come
And breathed on every frantic brow,
Their bravest hordes by myriads bow.
Old gory dreamer ! what say'st now ?
Arise with me ! a million brands
Are dripping in unpractis'd hands ;
The torch is in the palace dome,
And nought but Ruin finds a home ;

The proudest chiefs in pride may mount
Their warriors 'neath the morning sun,
But, ere his setting, death can count
A thousand for their one !
Arise !—the blood of that fair land
Would deluge even our wastes of sand !”

The famish'd bird, to havoc true,
Shook his old plumage in delight,
And, with his strong-wing'd brother, flew
To mingle in the fight.

THE FLOWER.

TO MY AMIABLE AND ACCOMPLISHED FRIEND, MISS JANE MUNRO,
THESE SIMPLE STANZAS ARE DEDICATED.

MAIDEN, though its bloom be gone,
Yet wear this little flower for me,
It grew above the breast of one
Who much resembled thee.
Ay—she was light and lovely, when
She seem'd as never to grow old ;
A few moons since, and she was then
Of woman's richest mould.

Oh ! 'tis a lonely thing to hope,
Then mark those morning hopes decay—
To rear the flowers, then see them drop
All one by one away.
We trusted that her future years,
Like summer sunshine, would have pass'd,
All glory through this vale of tears,
Safe from misfortune's blast.

The buds, that now are living flowers,
 Were sleeping in their beds of green,
When late she moved through pleasure's bowers,
 The spirit of the scene.
She died ; the shadow of decay
 Fell on her aching heart like balm ;
Scarce could we think she was away,
 Her parting was so calm !

Maiden, these are the blessed flowers
 Which waved above her lowly rest,
Nursed by the lone and laughing hours,
 Oh, wear them next thy breast !
As emblem of her, till we meet
 In regions, when we shall behold,
Far, far beneath our airy feet,
 The wrecks of systems roll'd.

THE MOONBEAM.

THOU streamest through the grated cell
Where freedom pines away ;
Thou com'st in joyous flight, to tell
Of hope's unclouded day ;
Thou speak'st of stars and mountain streams,
Of heaven's unsullied dome,
And, more than all, of childhood's dreams,
And flowers that hallow'd home.

Thou breathest of those visions bland
When bliss around us flew,
When Love walk'd laughing hand in hand
With Time who simper'd too ;
Lull'd by the odour of youth's hour,
Which charm'd his sense the while,
When, wheresoe'er he moved, a flower
Sprang up, that made him smile.

SONG.

Love form'd thee, my Julia ! his wild spirit stole

Through thy bosom predestined his throne,
And soon thou didst rise in thy beauty—a soul
As sparkling and soft as his own.

He gazed on his image without shade or blot,
To which his bright stamp had been given,
Hung o'er thee in rapture, until he forgot
That his seat was left vacant in heaven.

He gazed on thy young and thy beautiful mould,
Where harmony breathed o'er each part ;
But knowing full well that his work would grow old,
He bestow'd upon virtue thy heart.
Then let chance frown on—'neath his sternest control
My spirit her manhood will keep,
If bless'd with thy smiles, thou young beam of my soul,
Though Fortune should pass me asleep. . . .

SONG.

THOUGH` this wild brain is aching,
Spill not thy tears with mine ;
Come to my heart,—though breaking,
Its firmest half is thine.
Thou wert not made for sorrow,
Then do not weep with me ;
There is a lovely morrow,
That yet will dawn on thee.

When I am all forgotten,
When in the grave I lie ;
When the heart that loved thee 's broken,
And closed the sparkling eye ;
Love's sunshine still will cheer thee,
Unsullied, pure, and deep,
For the God, who 's ever near thee,
Will never see thee weep.

TO THE SKY.

ALMIGHTY tabernacle, where the scars
Of time, and chance, and change can leave no blight—
Where God is minister, and suns and stars
The glorious worshippers ; and life and light,
And storm and whirlwind, in their rushing might,
And clouds and lightning, and the thunder's tone,
And the wild hurricane in savage flight,
The music chimed to the Eternal One, [throne :
Whose hand has stretch'd thee out, and form'd thee for his

Thou art the only temple fit to lend
To earth's Creator dignity and praise ;
The mountain cliffs the footsteps that ascend
To thy high altar—and the sun's far rays
Thy shrine, which glitters with undying blaze.
Let the soul eye thee—and she will expand.
Not vainly did the Persian of old days
Erect his altar on the highest land ;
God there was felt and seen unchangeable and grand.

The spirit pants for greatness—earth's young race
Knelt to their Maker on the rugged peak ;
Those crags that look the pale stars in the face,
The patriarchs of creation were not weak ;
And still the spirit in her strength will seek
A bosom-thrilling dome for the Most High,
A shrine which in its lonely might will speak
Of things that will not change, and cannot die ;
Where is a pile more vast than the wild hills and sky ?

There will she trace her God in characters
That will not wither with the lapse of time ;
The solitary comets, and the stars,
That o'er the icy mountains nightly climb ;
The sun, that stands amid the storm sublime ;
The clouds, that float in glory o'er the sea ;
The homeless winds, that in their wandering chime
On the wild hills their songs of liberty ;
All in their strength speak forth, Invisible, of thee.

There, on the peaks of the high solitude,
The soul becomes familiar with the tone,
The prayer, which Nature pours in solemn mood
From her vast unwall'd temple to the one
Sole ruling Spirit on his starry throne:—

Come, unbeliever, in your wanderings, come !
Climb the green desert—listen to the lone,
Deep, indistinct, and all-pervading hum
Which Nature sings to heaven, for she is never dumb.

There sit 'mid her sublimity, and doubt !
View the bright world of vapours, as they roll ;
List to the mountain tempests, like the shout
Of nations in their joy ; each shining pole
Gleams with the living sun ; and to thy soul
Can Nature not lift up her mighty voice ?
The river, rushing o'er its watery goal,
The wilderness—the flood—the precipice—
All breathe aloud of God—oh ! wherefore not rejoice

With Nature in her gladness, when she tells
That man is made to hold his high career
Beyond the starry wilderness, where dwells
A Being fit to adore, not fear ?
Oh ! wouldst thou have thy spirit moulder here ?
Gaze on earth's vault—the glaciers that, like sea
Of glory, glitters in the atmosphere,
Robed in the winter of eternity— [thee
Oh ! sceptic, pause—and read—such books were writ for

Stretch on, bright sky ! earth's hills are but like wrecks
Lying along thy breast of cloud and flame ;
What even are all the stars but little specks,
Floating in thy far glory ; thou'rt the same
From year to year, while Nature's giant frame
Is plough'd and palsied with the weight of age ;
The earth shows nothing but her children's shame,
But thou remain'st for aye the brightest page
In God's great work, unsoil'd and laughing at time's rage.

The pillars of the world shall crack and bend,
Planets be quench'd in night, but thou wilt be
The cradle of new stars, when God shall send
The wither'd systems from eternity :
Thou mightiest temple of the Deity !
Time has not dimm'd thy forehead—endless years
Roll on, but quench not thy obscurest ray,
Nor steal the beauty from thy living spheres, [tears.
Which like thine altars, blaze while earth is worn with

LEONIDAS AT THERMOPYLÆ.

XERXES still entertaining some hopes of the flight of the three hundred Spartans, waited four days on purpose to give them an opportunity to retreat ; and in this interval, he used his utmost endeavours to gain Leonidas, by making him magnificent promises, and assuring him that he would make him master of all Greece if he would come over to his party. Leonidas rejected every proposal with scorn and indignation. Xerxes having afterwards written to him to deliver up his arms, Leonidas, in a style and spirit truly laconic, answered him in these words—" Come and take them."

THREE hundred—and they stood
With freedom's flag unfurl'd—
Their swords unsheathed, and unsubdued,
Against the banded world.
Their cities all were sacked,
Destruction's flames had clasp'd them ;
Their fearful blades were red and hack'd,
But still each strong arm grasp'd them.

Their foot was on the hill
Which in happier moments bore them ;

Around them were their homes—and still
Their country's sun shone o'er them.
The vale—the sky—the rock—
The breeze—the mountain river—
Each element of glory spoke,
And bade them stain it never.

Hope's meteor gleam had set,
Fair freedom's shrine was riven,
And they were deeply wrong'd—but yet
Each wrong was unforgiven.
They've javelins that can smite,
And fame that still may flourish,
And blades that yet in blood can write
Their requiem when they perish.

Their latest stand sublime,
The mountains dark seem viewing,
And they are monuments that time
Can never lay in ruin.
Each blue and icy peak
That splits the far clouds floating,
From nature's page their fame will speak
When they and theirs are rotting.

Brush'd by the dancing air,
Like ocean heaves their plumage,
And Persia's despot glitters there,
But who will do him homage ?
In vain his battled line
Meets freedom when she charges—
In vain his gather'd millions shine
Along the mountain gorges.

They came,—they little knew
The chief whose falchion glittered
Like sunbeam 'mid the gallant few,
Proud hearts, by wrongs embittered.
They tread the evening flowers,
Ere morning's dew has wet them,
Graves then will be their only dowers
When Sparta's sons have met them.

Ay, strike ! your fathers' ghosts
Are o'er your phalanx bending,
Hovering to see yon fearful hosts
Before your torrent rending ;
Yes ! let their banners fly,
Here are no lips to bless them ;

And if they fall, what weeping eye,
Or broken heart, shall miss them ?

'Tis eve—the sun's warm lip
Hath kiss'd the smiling waters ;—
'Tis night—and the broad moon is up,
And all her laughing daughters.
Though Persia's hosts are nigh,
Let other minions serve them ;
The men of Greece have learned to die.
Death cannot now unnerve them.

As floats the eagle, when
Some feathered foe does find him,
The chief gazed wildly on the men
Of Persia come to bind him ;
He shook the awful brand
Which oft, when hope was fading,
His sire had purpled for his land,
'Gainst hosts that were invading.

Fierce as the bolts that fringe
The storm which o'er earth tramples—
A glory, death could only change,
Played round his swarthy temples.

He stood on freedom's range
Of crags, like one who knew her ;—
He stood, like spirit of revenge,
To smite the slaves that slew her.

The heralds came—the power
Of empires were behind them ;
They bade Greece yield her swords and cower,
When her heroes had resign'd them.
The Spartan chief exclaimed—
“ No ! not while we can make them
Dig graves for Persia's proud and famed—
But let them come and take them ! ”

THE SKELETON OF THE WRECK.

IN the year 1789, the hull of a merchant vessel was discovered drifting on the high seas ; and, on searching the wreck, one man was found reduced to a mere skeleton ; he had evidently been many weeks alone in the ship, the crew of which had perished by the plague. The survivor is supposed to relate the following to those who picked him up.

ETERNAL sea ! a fearful tithe,
Of man, and man's frail works are thine ;
Mown down by Havoc's gory scythe,
They rot beneath thy brine.
Spirit of power ! unveil thy bed,
And, oh ! restore me back my dead.
Ay, still I hear that scream, which told
The plague is here—so deep, so cold,
And so unearthly—far it swept
Along the spray, while echo kept
That death-shriek floating o'er the waves,
Wild requiem for untimely graves ;
Then were the victims of our deck
More frenzied than in storm or wreck,

With sounds of blasphemy and prayer,
All wildly hurrying here and there ;
And then the long low parting breath,
And the fierce fiery thirst of death ;
The fall of the unshrouded head,
For none hung o'er the livid dead,
That lay with glazed and starting eye,
Teeth set, and brow turn'd to the sky,
Lips blue and bloodless, bosoms pale,
Hands spread, whose each extended nail
Was deep indented in the deck,
As ebb'd their heart's convulsive tide,
I stood amid this horrid wreck,
With none but Ada by my side.

Long drifted we across the sea,
Forgotten and forsaken ones,
Till the rank weeds luxuriantly
Had cluster'd round the sapless bones.
Hope we had none—above our head
Hot clouds, or shivering tempests spread ;
Around us one wide world of waves ;—
We thought upon our fathers' graves,
Dug calmly on the lone green hill,
Where trees were fresh and clouds were still.

On—on we drifted, while the deep
Hiss'd fiercely o'er each wither'd heap ;
I heard the sea-bird on the blast,
I heard the big waves rushing past,
And oft while I could lift mine eye,
And gaze upon the flood and sky,
I saw the shark come rolling by,
Gaping to seize my dying one
That dropp'd beneath the burning sun.

Hers was a form we seldom find ;
Whose beauty, kindled up with mind,
Around each gazer's spirit stole,
Till part of the enthusiast's soul
My Ada grew ;—in her last hour,
I thought upon our childhood's bower,
A thought which breathed around perfume
The sickening shadows of the tomb ;
I saw again our kindred star ;
I heard once more my love's guitar,
And those sweet native airs, that fling
Such beauty o'er life's early spring.
She lay beneath eve's dewy star,
Herself as beautiful—and far

Came dancing round us many a light,
As if the spirit of the Night
Had hung his calm lamps o'er the sea,
To guide her spotless soul when free.

When she was dead, my glazing eye
By instinct fix'd upon the sky,
As if to follow in its flight
Her spirit through those fields of light.
Ah ! then a western beam that hung
Far o'er the waters, warmly flung
A ray upon her faded cheek,
Which made her seem all life again,
Her parted lips look'd set to speak,
At least they had no curve of pain,
And on her brow, so still and fair,
Lay full enough of beauty there
To start within my brain despair.
Yet shall my Ada rise, and fling
The dust of ages from her wing,
And meet me in those fields on high
When worlds are crashing in the sky.

On went our bark, with none to guide
Her pathway through the lonely tide ;

No soul within her breathed but I,
Who was too weak to steer her course ;
We drifted 'neath whatever sky
The waters swung her in their force.
And storms had leak'd and swamp'd her through ;
Corruption sat on all like dew,
Clammy, and thick, and sickening—all
Lay shrouded in that dreadful pall.
Away we bounded : black and lone,
I lay and writhed upon my back,—
And guide or compass I had none
To point my cheerless track.
On my sear'd brain a stupor sank,
The ocean spray I madly drank ;
My hot eyes reel'd on that wild deck ;
I felt as if Death grasp'd my neck ;
My dim orbs flash'd, while thirst became
Within my throat a raging flame ;
My heart beat quick, my lips were black ;
Warm as the red sun o'er our track,
My spirit, with convulsive strain,
Seem'd throbbing through my very brain ;
A dizzy film beset my sight ;
Day came—and went—but all was night ;

A maddening dream, a pang intense,
A whirling storm of soul and sense,
A chaos of all shapes that dart
To burn but not to break the heart :
I gasp'd with bloodless lip and pale,
And struck each strong convulsive nail
With maniac fierceness in the dead,
Whose ashes were around me spread.
Like lightning o'er the floods we dash'd ;
I heard no voice, no cheering sound,
But the long ocean as it splash'd
In dreariness around.
So quick we whirl'd, my brain grew sick,
The objects came so fast and thick
Upon my glazed and burning eye,
The million clouds that cross'd the sky,
The sun-rays and the water's heave,
And many a beauteous star at eve ;—
If one lone cloud e'er floated in
The ocean of the moonlit air,
I stretch'd my fingers long and thin,
As if to grasp my Ada there.

One day—one glorious summer noon,
For well I knew the air of June,

I felt a deep and sudden chill ;
The breeze was in a moment still,
And a low moan crept through the air,
As Nature heaved a stifled prayer
That spoke of storms—oh ! how I wish'd
Death from their wings as by they rush'd.
The wild wind rose, and charg'd the van
Of clouds o'er which the lightning ran,
Blinding me with its scorching flash—
Oh ! how I gloried in the clash,
And stretch'd my wither'd hands, to court
The thunder in its awful sport,
That tinged my temples with its light ;
But, ah ! the leveller would not smite.
The roused waves veil'd me like eclipse,
I oped my baked and shrivell'd lips,
For then I heard the rain-drops free
Come dancing downward on the sea ;
The cold drops from the passing wrack
Like balm fell in each bloody crack
Of my parch'd throat, my bloodless tongue
I spread and roll'd in ecstasy,
To catch the drops that round me sung—
Earth's sweetest draught to me ;

For oh, they seem'd as shower'd from heaven

To heal my bosom sear'd and riven.

Once, through my vessel's fractured rail,

Hope mock'd me with a distant sail,

A lonely ship, but far away,

And leagues of flood between us lay ;

And yet the shadow that she threw

Came dancing o'er the silver blue

Of the calm deep, as if she swung

Away but one short cable's length,

I strove to cry, but pain had wrung

From me my manhood's strength ;

The gurgle died within my throat—

Oh, then I felt that heart-ache, which

Comes when Destruction leaves a blot

For Hope's delusive touch.

And then I near'd a barren rock,

From which a long and savage flock

Of vultures pounced upon my wreck ;

I heard them feasting on the deck ;

They would have gored me, but my cry

Kept them at bay,—the dead were nigh.

I could not scare the spoilers, till

The hungry troop had gorged their fill,

When slowly rising, one by one,
Flapping their black wings in the sun,
I saw them shoot like shadows by,
And vanish in the depth of sky.

Once, at the opening flush of day,
When darkness dappled into grey,
And every star had crept away,
While the broad sun, with orbit dim,
Half trembled o'er the ocean's brim;
An arch magnificent was thrown,
So bright, so beautiful, so lone,
Pillar'd upon the azure deep,
And stretching, with majestic sweep,
Up the broad clouds—with glad surprise
I gazed, and gazed upon its beam,
And drank its lustre, till mine eyes
Were fetter'd on the glorious dream.
Well might I clear my throbbing sight,
And eye that rainbow with delight;
For hope was in its heavenly ray—
Scarce had its glories died away,
When your fair galley breasted mine:
You know the rest * * *

TO THUNDER.

TREMENDOUS Spirit ! where dost thou abide,
When sleeping in the caverns of the air,
Before thou dost exalt thy crest,—and ride
Along the storm like Angel of Despair ?
Where is thy throne, almighty warrior ?—where
The urn at which thou light'st thy dreadful brand,
Till the far nations see thy sulphury glare
Flash'd forth in glory from thy cloudy hand,
While o'er a thousand hills thou rollest awfully grand ?

Swart ranger of the wide and starry hall !
Dim and magnificent is thy abode,
When the clouds hang their drapery like a pall
Over thy murky dwelling—thou hast trod,
From far eternity, thy darksome road
Deep, rolling, vast, unfetter'd, and sublime,
Stunning the nations like the voice of God,
Heard through all seasons, and in every clime,
The same fierce withering bolt that yet will shrivel time.

Hoar wanderer of the heavens ! when thou dost fly,
Marshall'd and banner'd in thy dark array,
Amid the desolation of the sky,
The dimples on the cheek of morn decay,
Her laughing beauties soon are brush'd away.
Hast thou a foe, stern warrior of the cloud ?
The sun himself seems darken'd with dismay,
Thy stormy messengers around him crowd,
As if they long'd to fling o'er him an endless shroud.

Oh ! 'tis a dreadful, yet a lovely hour,
When thy big echo fills the trembling air,
When Nature owns her Maker's awful power,
And bends submissive as if awed to prayer ;
It looks as if the seraphim were there,
Attending the Eternal through the sky,
As on that morn when life's old tree is bare,
When its last blossom has been seen to die,
When thou and thine shall come to herald the Most High.

When opes the portals of the grave to light,
Thou art the awakening trumpet that shall start
The ancient sleepers from their dreams of night
Great voice of majesty and power ! thou art
The messenger to launch the latest dart

Which stuns creation to her farthest pole,
That smites Destruction to the very heart ;
Thou art commission'd in that levelling roll,
To blast all things below except the human soul.

The stunn'd creation shudders at thy shout,
And Nature owns the presence of her God,
His voice is peal'd above her ; can she doubt
The One whose red right arm can raise the rod,
And strike out systems from the world—whose nod
Creates—annihilates ;—earth seems to reel
When thou art travelling from thy far abode.
Thou speakest to the nations, and we feel
As if the Godhead spoke in every mighty peal.

Oh ! that my spirit in its strength were blent
With thy fleet lightnings, as they spring on high ;
That I, a portion of thy element,
Might range with thee the desert of the sky,
All fire—all soul—all motion—and all eye !—
Oh ! that my soul could fling her fetters off,
And with the gift of immortality,
Roam like the solitary stars that doff
Their darkness in the night, beyond Earth's bitter scoff !

ON A HIGHLAND BURIAL GROUND.

ONE of the most sequestered dwellings of the dead in Scotland, stands on the grey side of a lonely hill terminating a long range, that, running through Argyleshire, dips at last into the waves of the western ocean. Death seems to have made it his favourite region, by blasting every thing around but one solitary tree, which, like some unhappy spirit, waves and wails in the dull and drizzling breeze of the Atlantic.

It stood upon the green hills ; round it grew
Some aged thistles shaking in the breeze
Their caps of down ; before it, broad and blue,
To dim and lonely grandeur, spread the seas,
Restless and troubled, and the old sea-mew
Sat on the cliffs like sorrow ill at ease.
How silent are the dead ! and yet, perchance,
Old Ossian's harp rung out its wildest tones
Above the perish'd, when, to wrap their bones,
Were piled the grey stones of the hill : my glance
Roved with a sad delight o'er Death's expanse.

I stood on Cruachan, * and round me slop'd
The glens of Scotland with their solemn din,
Ere twilight came from her dim bower, and oped
A passage for the moon and all her kin.
It was a lovely evening—and the sun
Shot through some drooping clouds a watery smile ;
An eagle that had all day wander'd on,
Tired with the flight of many a weary mile,
Rested among the graves ; from heaven's high height
A Sunbeam straggled to that place of rest,
As if forsaken on its lonely flight,
And panting like the bird for its own nest
In the far arbours of the glowing west.
Mute cower'd the rider of the tempest, where
Silence sat sleeping on each grassy mound,
And 'mid the stillness of the Highland air,
That moment's sunburst shed a glory round.
Both seem'd an emblem to my musing eye,
As they hung hovering o'er Death's narrow bed ;
The one like Mercy smiling from on high
Above the lowly and forgotten dead ;
The other like a seraph of the sky
Sent down to bid each dreamer lift his head.

* A high mountain in Argyleshire.

STANZAS.

Yes—thou may'st smile, to hear me sigh,
And laugh to see me weep ;
The eyes are full that will not dry,
The heart that will not sleep.

Frail summer rose, thou hadst thy stings,
Love fashion'd thee, but gave thee wings,
Through sunshine thou didst keep
Thy path ; a butterfly for sweets,
That dallies with each flower it meets.

'Tis well those morning hours are past,
For ever vanish'd now ;

The visions were too bright to last,
They roll'd away—and thou,
With all the fickleness of youth,
Hast dimm'd the honour of thy truth,
Hast broken thy first vow ;

We've drank the bitter draught which sours
What Hope had nursed, and knit for years.

The star we used to journey by,
 When summer eves were still,
When we have watch'd the burnish'd sky
 Roll o'er the western hill,
Still meets me in the blue expanse,
But ah ! its mild unclouded glance
 Wakes many a former thrill,
And breathes with its unsullied ray
The dreams—the hopes of boyhood's day.

Ay,—underneath that spacious sky
 Since all those dreams have set,
There 's not a place where thou and I
 Could meet, as we have met.
No, no ! the visions of the past,
Our spirit's fairest, first, and last,
 Their memory could not let
Our passions grow, as once they grew—
The grave can only join us two.

THE COVENANTERS.

THE mad old world had still her banquet hours ;
Her slaves their fetters and their dreams of joy,
Tyrants their gibbets, victims, racks, and towers ;
But they were only left the boon to die.
Yet in the might of innocence they stood,
Nought but the sky above them, and around
The glorious depths of mountain solitude,
Where in its thrilling vacancy they found
A shrine to worship the Eternal God,
In silence and in sunshine ; and that One,
Who stretch'd the heavens in majesty abroad,
Bent down to listen, and redress each moan.
Oh thou, Almighty Spirit ! who hast rode
Through far infinity, make every groan
Which Freedom heaves,—a talisman to start
A million patriots round each despot's throne,
Whose righteous appeal, before they part,
May be address'd to heaven with harness on,
And their sharp falchions buried in his heart !

ECLIPSE.

WE trace a world of wonders in the sky,
And of the million children on its breast,
Some in their lonely loveliness may die,
Like aged eagles on the glacier's crest,
Drooping in silence up in their high nest ;
Comets may scourge them in their wandering,
And Darkness hush them to eternal rest—
Or thou, sublime Eclipse ! which oft does fling [wing:
Grief o'er their shining brows, may veil them with thy

What art thou, phantom of Day's wilderness !
That dar'st to rise like Earthquake in high heaven,
And, in thy solitary darkness, kiss
The stars, that seem like their Creator living ?
Art thou a blast from hell's dominion driven ?
A tempest, and no more ?—a wandering one,
Or scar by some destroying angel given
To the fair forehead of the joyous sun—
And when the planet smiles, is thy oppression done ?

Art thou a shadow, flung from Time's grey pinions,
Along the laughing features of the day,
When mounts the wizard from his dull dominions,
And dozing o'er the universe does stray?
Or is it Satan on his stormy way,
Sweeping like hurricane athwart the sky,
Flinging a midnight with the mighty play
Of his huge wings, as he is soaring by,
On the pure rolling orbs that in his journey lie?

Spectre of twilight! in the realms of space,
Art thou like Death, a messenger of gloom,
Spreading thy cold hand o'er each planet's face,
Shrouding them in the garments of the tomb?
Or art thou but a fever that will come,
A transient sickness o'er each mighty star,
From their pale foreheads banishing the bloom?
Dweller of loneliness! thou seem'st to mar
The glory of the spheres in their high homes afar.

Thou risest up like Death, and stand'st between
The bright hair'd day-star and the shivering earth;
Thou wrapp'st a mantle round night's loving queen,
Thou strik'st the dimple from her cheek—the mirth,

The fire of Nature dies on her blue hearth ;
A cold dead twilight falls athwart the world,
Such as Creation witness'd at her birth,
Ere the fresh wings of Morning were unfurled,
And from his throne of clouds Night's spectre king was
hurled.

When we behold thee lower upon the sun,
Are revolutions happening there—a deed
Which, by some mighty master-spirit done,
Can make a planet like an empire bleed ?
Are there some rude rebellion—some old creed
Attack'd and overthrown within its clime ?
Or have a shackled population freed
Themselves from error, tyranny, and crime ?—
Oh! can heaven's wonders change that look unscath'd
by Time ?

Art thou the ghost of some dead system, cast
From all communion with the stars, and doom'd
To wander o'er th' immeasurable vast
Without e'er being in its ruin tomb'd ?
Has thy frail wither'd orb in might presumed

To war 'gainst the Eternal, till a blank
It wither'd in the universe ?—or boom'd
It o'er the desert, and upon the bank
Of chaos hung, like fire—then in its waters sank.

If thou 'rt the spirit of a perish'd star,
Thou must have felt the whirlwind and the shock,
Which launch'd through night thy reeling orb afar,
And all its bands with fair creation broke.
I marvel not that thou dost love to mock,
With ghastly glory, thy old sisterhood
Of living lights, that still in beauty flock
Around their God, in his high solitude :
Though thou art but a shade, oh ! thou art not subdued.

Death, in his darkness, shall obliterate
Those worlds that seem exulting in their prime ;
Thou dull and solitary potentate,
Rise in thy dim array and stand sublime !
Or roll in glory o'er heaven's startled clime,
Black as thy rayless wings, which yet shall fall
Above the deathbed of the pilgrim Time.
Magnificent shadow ! thou shalt be the pall,
The hoary sepulchre, that yet shall swallow all !

THE FLIGHT OF NERO.

Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy tower to-day, yet a few years and the blast of the desert comes, it howls in thy empty court.

OSSIAN.

His groan was echo'd by the roll
Of thunder on the blast,
Which bellow'd to his shrinking soul
Heaven's mercy as he pass'd.
The lightning, sheering through the air,
Flash'd on his sallow brow ;
He thought upon his childhood's prayer,
But could not breathe it now.

He gazed upon the sky—the shaft
Hiss'd burning through the gloom,
And the storm sung, as if it laugh'd
At his approaching doom ;
While Tiber, with his angry waves,
Yell'd as the fiend rode by,
As if his victims, from their graves,
Curs'd him in that wild cry.

Night wrapp'd him with her sulphury pall,
And, through the sweeping surge,
The vulture, on the capitol,
Scream'd forth his funeral dirge.
The bolt, that plough'd the starless vault,
The earthquake's yawn, the roar
Of storms, that bade his charger halt,
And stream from every pore ;

Are now the only friends that join
The wild one in his flight,
The kindred sounds that dare combine,
To cheer him through the night.
Of earth's imperial throne bereft,
He sees her purple glories fly ;
Thus every despot should be left,—
Unfriended, thus should die !

LINES

TO MY SISTER, MRS JOHN MOORE, ON THE DEATH OF HER FIRST-BORN,
AN INTERESTING AND BEAUTIFUL BOY.

OH, weep not, Sister ! He who makes thee bleed,
Although he bruise, can prop the broken reed.
His arrow, true to its devoted mark,
That cut thy flower, was launch'd not in the dark.
He saw the blissful change—and he will heal
The wounds of thy fond heart.—Yet thou must feel :
Thine was a mother's pride,—a mother's joy,
While bending o'er thy fair and sprightly boy ;
Thou didst not deem so soon the stone to raise
Above the wither'd bud of thy young days ;
Hope never pointed to his tomb, but brought
His manly glories round thy raptur'd thought.
But all those dreams are past, and thou art left
Like Rachel weeping, of her child bereft ;
Yet dry thy tears, fair mourner,—thou hast still
Thy bosom's lord ; although the beautiful
Hath faded from thy vision, he will rise,
And thou shalt mount and clasp him in the skies,
When worlds are ashes, and when Nature dies.

THE GUARDIAN SPIRIT.

Burst thy dwelling, oh wind! that the daughter of night may look from her gates in the sky, while the shaggy mountain brightens, and the ocean rolls his white waves in glory.—

OSSIAN.

I HAVE left my shroud in the darksome grave,
And far have I travell'd o'er mountain and wave,
To watch, as I've done in our own native bowers,
Thy slumber at noon, when the fair-hair'd hours
Came dancing in light round Creation's breast,
Lulling the spirit of Nature to rest ;
When the young wave leapt to the breeze's tune,
That drew the veil from the lady moon.
Though the black sod rests on my bosom bare,
Though its slime has darken'd my yellow hair,
Yet the cool of the sky and the wandering gale
Are sweet to lips so parch'd and pale ;
And the breeze is dear on its viewless way,
For it breathes the wild song of my early day.
When the eye of the world beholds me not,
I glide, at eve, to that hallow'd grot

Where we whisper'd the vow ere our hopes had set,
And I dream of its perish'd music yet ;
The trees that waved o'er our bosoms then,
For me spread their blooming boughs again ;
And the same bird's song, and the same blue star,
Looks down on me from its home afar.
When the sun hung at eve on the ocean's breast,
How oft have we stray'd through the glens of the west,
And gazed on the grey hills, that branch'd away,
Like the waves of the sea on a stormy day.
For the sacred thought of those hallow'd hours,
I often roam through those skyey bowers
Where the haze of thy world is never seen,
And an atom of earth has never been ;
Where Silence ne'er gazed on a living thing,
Where the spirit alone hears the rush of her wing,
Skimming those tracks which she dares to trace,
Like a beam of the sun in the bosom of space.
Though systems lie floating within my ken,
Yet dearer to me is our own native glen,
Where the peaks of the Highlands, in beauteous crowds,
Start up through their solitary desert of clouds ;
And I bend with delight from my mansion on high,
To see their grey pinnacles cleaving the sky.

Oh ! I shrink when I see the long worm crawl,
And the beetle asleep on my rotten pall ;
But I turn away from the sickening sight,
To bathe my wings in the floods of night ;
I love to drink the fresh stream of the sky,
As, through the blue midnight, to thee I fly ;
When the flowers are wrapp'd in their dewy shrouds,
And the stars seem dreaming afar on their clouds ;
And the white moon looks on the muffled deep,
I chase the night-mare from thy strangled sleep,
And cool the fire of thy throbbing brain,
Till dreams of delight float round thee again.
I drink thy sigh—'tis a draught of bliss,
And I kiss thee, though thou dost not feel my kiss.
When visions of joy around me roll,
I waft those dreams to thy slumbering soul.
I loved thee below—I shall love thee on high—
Mine is the love of eternity,
Hallow'd in youth, and strengthen'd by time,
Pure from the shadows of sorrow and crime.
Granite and marble shall fall to decay,
The sun and its worlds all wither away,
But love, wafted pure from earth's valley of tears,
Shall bloom through an endless duration of years.

THE DEATH OF ALP ARSLAN.

THE fairest part of Asia was subject to his laws ; twelve hundred princes, or the sons of princes, stood before his throne, and two hundred thousand soldiers marched under his banners. The progress of his conquest of the East was retarded by Joseph, the carizmain, who presumed to defend his fortress against the power of the great king. When he was produced a captive in the royal tent, the sultan was provoked by his insolence to sentence him to death. At that moment the desperate captive, drawing a dagger, rushed headlong towards the throne ; the guards raised their battle-axes ; their zeal was checked by Alp Arslan, the most skilful archer of the age—he drew his bow, but his foot slipped, and he received in his breast the dagger of Joseph, who was instantly cut in pieces. The wound was mortal, and the Turkish prince bequeathed a dying admonition to the pride of kings. The remains of the sultan were deposited in the tomb of the Seljukian dynasty, and the passenger might read and meditate this useful inscription :—" Oh, ye who have seen the glory of Alp Arslan exalted to the heavens, repair to Maru—and you will behold it buried in the dust !"—Vide GIBBON.

HE started—and his eagle eye
Fell on the rushing foe,
His thousand guards were standing nigh,
To mar the fatal blow ;
Their proffered aid he sternly scann'd
He waved them off with giant hand,
And bent his father's bow,

But, in that hour of doubt and pride,
The erring javelin glanced aside.

The captive struck; 'twas but one blow,
A moment's shout,—a groan—

The terror of the world lies low,
The lion chief is gone!

A captive's dagger does subdue,
Has done, what millions could not do,
And turn'd that heart to stone,
Who made the nations round him bow—
His glory is departed now!

That fiery eye, that haughty crest,
The terror of the East,
Which call'd the vulture from her nest,
And spread for her a feast;
Which glanced across the desert's gloom
As withering as the red simoom,
Is now of earth's the least;
His dim eye glisten'd on his host,—
He spoke, but not as warriors boast.

“ But yesterday, and from my throne
I gazed o'er this array,

And deem'd earth's millions all mine own,

And panted for the fray ;

Their standards rolling in the sky

Flash'd on my heart with frantic joy—

Where are these hosts to-day?

They still are there—the firm—the brave—

But Alp, thine empire is the grave !

“ Methought the earth beneath my feet

Reel'd with my giant power ;

Those dreams of glory were as fleet

As lightning in the shower.

In vain the battle brand I clasp,

It quivers in my feverish grasp ;

Death is my only dower ;

Ye that have seen my conquest's glare,

Go to my tomb, and trace it there !

“ Ye that have seen my glory, come—

The grave will hold its trust ;

There you will see my flatterers dumb,

And all my minions just.

Ay, death, without a courtier's pains,

Will tell ye what of me remains—

A shroud—decay—and dust—

A few wild flowers—a dark grey stone—
Worms for the revellers round my throne.

“In my youth’s summer I have sank ;
Kings read your conqueror’s fall—
He whom your proudest glories drank,
Now view him in his pall.
Learn, as ye muse upon his doom,
When Death strikes down the loftiest plume,
A little dust is all
Left at the last, to mark the grave
Where rots the monarch and his slave !

“Gone are my feverish days of fame,
My dreams of power ; and I
Am nothing but a dreaded name,
Heard like storms rushing by.
Ah glory ! thou’rt a fading leaf,
Thy fragrance false, thy blossoms brief,
And those who for thee sigh
Worship a falling star, whose path
Is lost in darkness, and in death !”

TO THE MOON.

THE myriads of mankind depart—they die,
They leave no vestige that they once have been,
But thou remain'st for ever in the sky,
Renewing thy existence,—night's fair queen !
The earth is old—her breast has lost its green,
Fresh robes of morning ; temples fall with years ;
But thou and thy companions still are seen ;
Thy glorious sisterhood of living spheres,
They perish ~~not~~—they wither not, with grief or tears.

I marvel not, when eying thy sublime
And beautiful effulgence on the sea,
That the lone star-read Chaldean of far time
Should thus have built his altar unto thee,
Bending on the high hills a patient knee ;
For, oh ! thou art a beauty in the sky,
A light, a glory, and a mystery,
Mantled in silver charms that cannot die,
And worship pour'd to thee was scarce idolatry.

Oft on the broad and pillar'd streets of Thebes
Thy beam has glitter'd, mantling many a pile
Which, when the ocean of the desert ebbs
And the sands shift, again may woo thy smile.
Time treads down empires ; but thou stream'st the while
Over the hoary pyramids, as bright
As when the ancient dwellers of the Nile
Beheld thy beauty from each marble height,
And pour'd their prayers to thee in the lone hour of night.

Ay, thou wert worshipp'd in the Memphian halls,
A million priests to thee address'd their vow ;
States sink, men perish, and old glory falls,
Religions change,—where are thy votaries now ?
The reverend heads, the mighty that did bow,
Sunk with their shatter'd obelisks, they rot
Among their stones and wild-weeds ; not so thou,
Thy beauty flashes from thy starry grot
O'er those dark sepulchres, where empires lie forgot.

Thy mansion is all glory ; thou dost rise,
And shine, and walk in beauty, in thy play
Wooing the bashful clouds with laughing eyes ;
If they like sickness dim thy cheek,—thy sway

Soon drives the blighting plague-spots far away,
Rushing betwixt them with thy silver wand ;
In vain their gather'd masses round thee stray,
No wrinkles mar thy brow ; Death's giant hand
Grasps nations ; thou alone unsullied keep'st thy stand.

When thou art streaming o'er the pathless hills,
Nature seems feeling pleasure in the night,
Her old and wither'd bosom wildly thrills
As if a thousand dreams flash'd on her sight ;
She drinks thy shining torrents with delight ;
The ocean is thy vassal ; thou canst hold
His million waves in all their savage might ;
The sun is not thy father ; thou hast roll'd [old.
Ten thousand years through space, and yet thou art not

I loved thee, gentle moon ! thou wert to me
Brother and sister and companion—all
My kin, while standing on the silent lea
I watch'd thy glory in the starry hall ;
And thy white beams like shower of diamonds fall
Upon the azure desert ; lovely light,
Sure thou wert fashion'd, when Sin's fatal pall
Was flung o'er earth, to welcome from her flight
The lone and weary soul that journeys through the night.

TO A SHIP'S PENNON.

AWAY, away, to the topmast high,
For that is thy native place ;
There wanton in the blue of the sky,
Like a star in the depths of space.
Through many a fair and sunny clime
It is thy lot to range ;
Through wastes where the fingers of withering Time
Has ne'er written one word of change.

The dim and starry wilderness,
And the deep and mighty sea,
And the lone blue clouds that each other kiss,
Are the kin that will be with thee.
Thou'lt dance aloft in thy measureless hall,
While the solitary breeze
Wakes silence, to join his carnival
On the broad and weltering seas.

Thou'lt ride alone in thy fields of blue,
Like eagle on the blast,

Above the heads of the gallant crew

That nail'd thee to the mast.

And if they meet their country's foe,

They'll sink in the depths of the yawning main,

Ere they strike thy towering plumage low,

Or fling on thee one stain.

Flag of Britain! what earthly eye

Can gaze on thee in thy lonely flight?

The sun in the awful depths of the sky,

The homeless clouds that fringe his height,

The round living moon that rolls through night,

The streamers that play through the groves of space,

The stars that sit on their thrones of light,

Can eye thee alone in thy pride of place.

When the ocean shrieks o'er his mighty harp,

Brush'd by the wild hand of the storm,

Oh! may no ruffian tempest warp

His arms of lightning round thy form.

But may'st thou glitter again on our land,

Red rover of the pathless sea,

And kindle each heart on the cheerless strand

That lonely waits for thee!

TO A PETRIFIED TREE

DUG UP IN A MINE IN HUNGARY.

METHINKS thou wert of that tall race
Whose leafy heads waved in the sky,
When, rolling from the womb of Space,
Creation oped her eye.
Thou wert the blossoming abode,
Where the wing'd wanderers learn'd to sing
The earliest coronal that God
Twined round the brow of Spring !

Child of the perish'd wilderness !
Thou'st braved, in thy unshrinking power,
The first launch'd storm, and thou didst kiss
The earliest laughing hour.
Thou wert ere man began to build
His pillar'd cities in the grove,
The maiden sceptre, Summer held,
To show that God was Love.

The lightning's infant shaft that flew,
The thunder, and all-shaking storm,
The first that Winter's icelips blew,
Mantled thy giant form.
And 'neath thy boughs, which vainly flaunt
When twilight suns were waxing dim,
The thrilling harp was struck to chant
The earliest Poet's hymn !

The dove that came to Noah, thou
May'st have supplied with that fair bud,
When through the dark, God's glittering bow,
Like Hope, hung o'er the flood ;
So 'mid the starless solitude,
While systems 'neath her feet are hurled,
The soul shall stand—as thou hast stood—
Above a perish'd world !

THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE.

WE are driven back, said an old warrior, until we can retreat no farther. Our hatchets are broken, our bows are snapped, and our fires are extinguished ;—a little longer and the white men will cease to persecute us, for we shall cease to exist.—Vide SKETCH BOOK.

THE great sun o'er the forest hung,
As the cold tide he quaff'd,
His quiver on his shoulders swung,
Drain'd of its latest shaft,
Faint from the battle's thunder-burst,
He stoop'd to quench his fiery thirst,
And wipe his throbbing brow ;
'Tis done—amid the solitude,
Unconquer'd, but alone he stood
The desert's latest now.

His heart beat quick ; his brain was hot,
His warrior kin were low ;

His latest arrow had been shot,
 Had struck a haughty foe ;
His bosom cords at length were sapp'd,
His plumes unbraced, his bow-string snapp'd,
 And from its wither'd stalk
The branch of peace was torn away ;
And, broken in the morning's fray,
 He left his tomahawk.

Beside him tower'd his own blue hills ;
 Beneath the sultry ray,
In glory sung his kindred rills
 A song of childhood's day.
The desert stretch'd in silence round,
Where like the pard, with sprightly bound,
 He chased the buffalo,
And stately panther through the wood,
And, monarch of his solitude,
 Laid the striped savage low.

But ah ! those happy hours are by ;
 His hopes are doom'd to bow,
The white bones of his kindred lie
 Along the desert now.

Silence broods o'er their dwellings, and
Death walks in triumph o'er the land ;
 Their shafts have struck in vain ;
They met the foe at morn—and he,
The last worn remnant of the free,
 In fetters must remain.

He lean'd against an oak, and smote
 His forehead with a groan ;
And gazing on the sun, he spoke—
 “Roll, star of light, roll on !
Thou glorious ruler of the storm,
Death dims not thy almighty form ;
 But we by myriads die ;
My kindred rose with thee to-day,
Thou still art on thy throne, but they
 In death or darkness lie.

“ Our last shaft has been launch'd, it fail'd
 To break the oppressor's link ;
Our foes are many—they've prevail'd,
 And we unfriended sink ;
Death sits on every warrior's brow,
Our hatchets are unwielded now,

While Havoc strews the plain ;
The tiger from his covert springs,
The thirsty vulture flaps her wings
Above ten thousand slain.

“ Hark ! in that wild and wandering blast
Which skiffs the forests brown,
The spirits of my sires have pass'd ;—
Oh ! look in mercy down !
Let not your bleeding son depart
In lonely brokenness of heart,
Till he on this blue Alp
Has piled a noble sacrifice,
To glad you in the starry skies,
With many a tyrant's scalp.

“ The tempest gathers o'er the slain
Loud as the battle's din ;
Rise, rise upon the hurricane,
Ye spirits of my kin !
Exalt your swart and shadowy forms ;
Come mantled in the mountain storms
Which split the eternal trees,
And in your cloudy darkness cast

Their lightning at our foes—and blast
Those despots from the seas.

“ Ghosts of the unburied dead, arise,
And on your clouds of night,
To the great Spirit of the skies
Oh, bend your airy flight !
Point with your cold and shadowy hands,
Where bleach your bones, where rust your brands,
And where the friendless range;
Pray for the children of the free,
And, if He grants not Liberty,
To give at least Revenge.”

SONNET I.

THE CATHEDRAL OF GLASGOW.

SOME of the old English cathedrals may surpass that of Glasgow in dimensions and in the richness of their architecture; but none in that massy and dark Gothic grandeur, which constitutes the chief beauty of the buildings erected during the middle ages, and which strikes the beholder with more awe, than the fretted and over-laboured ornaments of either Salisbury or Henry the VII.'s chapel.

MAJESTIC shrine of the undying God!
Amidst the wreck of ages thou hast seen
Times changed, and empires alter'd by the nod
Of the Omnipotent:—Ruin has been
Busy upon the world; yet thou art green.
Ten thousand sunsets now have tinged thy cheek,
And yet thou look'st as proudly in his eye
As on that morn, when first his crimson streak
Mellow'd thy infant turrets from on high.
Though twice five hundred years have o'er thee pass'd,
With all their stormy legions of the sky,
Yet thou canst still defy the thunder blast,
Like virtue struggling with adversity,
Though old and lonely, upright to the last.

SONNET II.

ON HEARING THE SOUND OF MISS H—'S LUTE IN THE
NIGHT.

AND Silence loved it; for it wander'd on,
So like the sound we sometimes hear in dreams,
Melting away among the cold moonbeams,
So sweet, an angel from his sapphire throne
Might have bent down to listen, as that lute
Sent its wild warble through the night alone,
Even making Silence on her throne more mute;
And Echo caught it in its silvery play,
And, taking up her harp with gladsome bound,
Began to chant it in her cavern grey,
Till Night became a soul instinct with sound,
And Time seem'd chain'd a moment on his way,
Listening in cold delight, as, round and round,
The hills reverberated back the lay,
Which sought repose in heaven, as not akin to clay.

SONNET III.

SUMMER MORNING.

COMPOSED DURING A WALK WITH MY FRIEND, MR A. WHITELOW.

NATURE has waked, and yawn'd, and oped her eye,
While on the mountains Morn has ta'en his stand,
Drawing night's curtain from the dreaming sky,
The glittering sunbeam in his dewy hand,
Bright sceptre, to assert his calm command
Over earth's grey expansion and the deep :
'Tis done—the gather'd clouds of night expand,
Starting like spirits from a troubled sleep ;
While far away the uplands, darkly grand,
Lift through the marble haze their foreheads steep ;
The dim air glitters into life ; the land
Smokes like a shrine to God ; with voice of mirth
The lark ascends her sunny temple, and
Bids the blue laughing hours embrace the earth.

SONNET IV.

THE MOUNTAIN CAIRN.

THIS is a rude heap of grey stones, covered with the moss of ages, and piled above the bones of some forgotten hero of the hills, who perished on an inroad to the Lowlands. It is situated on the grey summit of Campsie fells, surrounded with all the accompaniments of mountain grandeur, rude cliffs, wild streams, and solitary clouds. Few graves are so elevated, and none in a scene of sterner desolation.

GRAVE of the perish'd ! who can tell thy story ?
Yet there thou standest on the silent hill,
In all the majesty of mountain glory ;
Thy dirge,—the tempest sweeping sharp and chill.
Like Silence sleeping in the solitude,
Thou long hast dozed—the wandering sunbeams lend
A beauty to thy years ; the mists descend,
As if the clouds, in their majestic mood,
Loved o'er thee in their loneliness to bend ;
As if they gazed on thee as on a friend,
Nameless, and all unheeded like themselves.
Tomb of the desert ! the rude streams that wend
Around thee, and the eagle in the shelves
Of the grey precipice, are all that chant
A dirge above the bones of thy inhabitant.

SONNET V.

ON THE FIRST VIEW OF THE HIGHLANDS FROM STOCKIE
MOOR.

A WILD and desert track to the north-west of Glasgow, from which one of the most magnificent views in the island may be obtained. Around are the lone heaths and grey cliffs of the moor, forming a wild and noble foreground to the huge wall of the far Highlands, whose thousand fantastic peaks plunge deep in the bosom of heaven, while the silent waters of Loch-Lomond, at no great distance, sleep beneath that blue and beautiful sky so peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland.

Now, through the bosom of the laughing morn,
Ben-Lomond with his cap of snow appears,
The eagle, on her wings of glory borne,
Floats silently above his brow of years ;
Morn with her million clouds is on her way,
While Zephyr lips the bosom of the stream,
Whose waves, like Time, are leaping into day,
To sing a moment 'mid the hills, and gleam,—
Then pass for ever. Lo ! a thousand peaks
Of shining granite sleep amid the play
Of the fresh sunbeams, all in grandeur speaks
Of Scotland's plaids—the gathering—and the fray—
When Ossian and his kindred giants drew
The sword of Freedom on these deserts blue.

SONNET VI.

TO BEN-ARTHUR OR THE COBBLER,

ONE OF THE WILDEST OF OUR CALEDONIAN ALPS, SITUATED IN THAT
SINGULARLY RUGGED DISTRICT ON THE BANKS OF LOCH-LONG,
CALLED ARGYLE'S BOWLING-GREEN.

GAUNT Giant of the waste ! thou stand'st sublime,
The rugged genius of the solitude,
Amid the whirlwinds of almighty Time ;
Beneath thee rolls, and roars, and foams the flood,
Like the great restless world, with all its crime
And passions, which long years have not subdued.
Huge heap ! thou seem'st the swarthy skeleton
Of some volcano, with thy bowels riven,
As Earthquake's self had shaped thee for a throne,
To spit his fires against the lights of heaven,
And spew his hot and levelling lava down .
Upon the thousand peaks that round thee frown.
Now comes the round moon rolling from afar,
Her bosom girdled with a silken cloud,
And high above the Alps of Arroquhar
The stars have gather'd to a laughing crowd.

SONNET VII.

SPRING.

INSCRIBED TO MY FRIENDS, MR WM. ROSE, AND J. BINNIE, JUN.

THE world is quivering into life ; each bough
Throws up a thousand buds of lively green ;
The clouds have melted into smiles ;—and now
Summer, beside her sister Spring, is seen
Twining a rosy chaplet round her brow.
Creation laughs,—and seems again to feel
The warm embraces of the dancing hours ;
Along the silent hills the infant flowers
Drink in the wandering sunny rays, that steal
In sleepy glory o'er the budding bowers.
As thus I stand upon the uplands' brink,
'Mid birds, and floods, and woods—fair Nature's din,—
My heart seems breathing ;—oh ! my soul could drink
The ripe rich luxury of Nature in.

SONNET VIII.

WRITTEN AT ETERICK BAY, ISLAND OF BUTE, WHERE THE AUTHOR
SPENT A DELIGHTFUL SUMMER-DAY, FISHING AMONG ITS ROMANTIC
DELLS, WITH HIS FRIENDS, JOHN NORVAL AND J. B. THOMSON.

'Twas Twilight's hour of slumber,—and the blast
Had ceased to riot on the mountains ; where
A drowsy ocean of sunshine was cast,
Mantling creation with its golden glare ;
The dark clouds of a thunder shower had pass'd,
And silence gather'd in the trembling air,
Warm, thick, and panting from the tempest's last
Convulsive meeting—oh ! the world was fair :
The sun seem'd rolling to his slumbers fast,
And the pale stars were rising o'er the bare
Grey summits of the desert ; dim and vast,
The broad round moon was climbing up the sky,
Cold as the dead, and sullen as despair,
Like Death, to gaze on weak mortality.

SONNET IX.

ON THE BLACK MOUNT—A WILD SCENE IN ARGYLESHIRE.

THERE may be sweeter spots in the island, but certainly none of more savage or desolate grandeur. Situated in the midst of the highest Alps of the central Highlands, the view from its summit is nobly terrific; combining all the lone sublimity of the Arabian desert, with the sterner features of the valleys of Switzerland. The mountains of Breadalbane, Ben-Cruachan, and the other enormous masses of Argyle, with Ben-Nevis, and the deep black entrance into the vale of Coe, and those four rent and singularly wild-looking hills, which form the mouth of that glen of blood, comprise some of the features of the desolate landscape.

TWILIGHT has settled o'er dark Malmor's scars,
And Cona wanders onward to the deep;
Night comes with her tiara of proud stars,
And mantles the black vale; a horrid sleep
Reigns o'er the pass, save where the fitful sweep
Of some lone eagle hurrying through the sky,
Or distant wild-goat on the lowering steep,
Bounding like spectre o'er the promontory.
All seem in slumber; and the mountains hoar
No life has visited with looks of glee;
The gulf of Coe, and Rannoch's trackless moor
Yawn through the darkness like a stormy sea;
A lifeless haze each icy summit shrouds,
And huge Ben-Cruachan is hid in clouds.

SONNET X.

SUMMER EVENING SHOWER.

Star of descending night! fair is thy light in the west; thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud; thy steps are stately on the hill.

OBSTIAN.

THE playful breeze is dancing through the dell,
Breaking the azure crystal of the stream,
As if a shower of diamonds brightly fell,
And woke the blue waves from a pleasant dream.
The panting flowers have oped their shrivell'd lips,
To drink the dazzling moisture; the warm shower,
Like laughing mirth, has fill'd their wasted cups,
A living freshness clothes each drooping bower.
The hymn of rosy evening has begun;
The gladsome trees, that wave along the sky,
Shine in the golden glitter of the sun;
The birds that cower'd, as pass'd the rain clouds by,
Start from the glancing bushes, one by one,
And, leaping on the green and quivering spray,
Trim their cold dripping wings, to chant their evening lay.

THE END.

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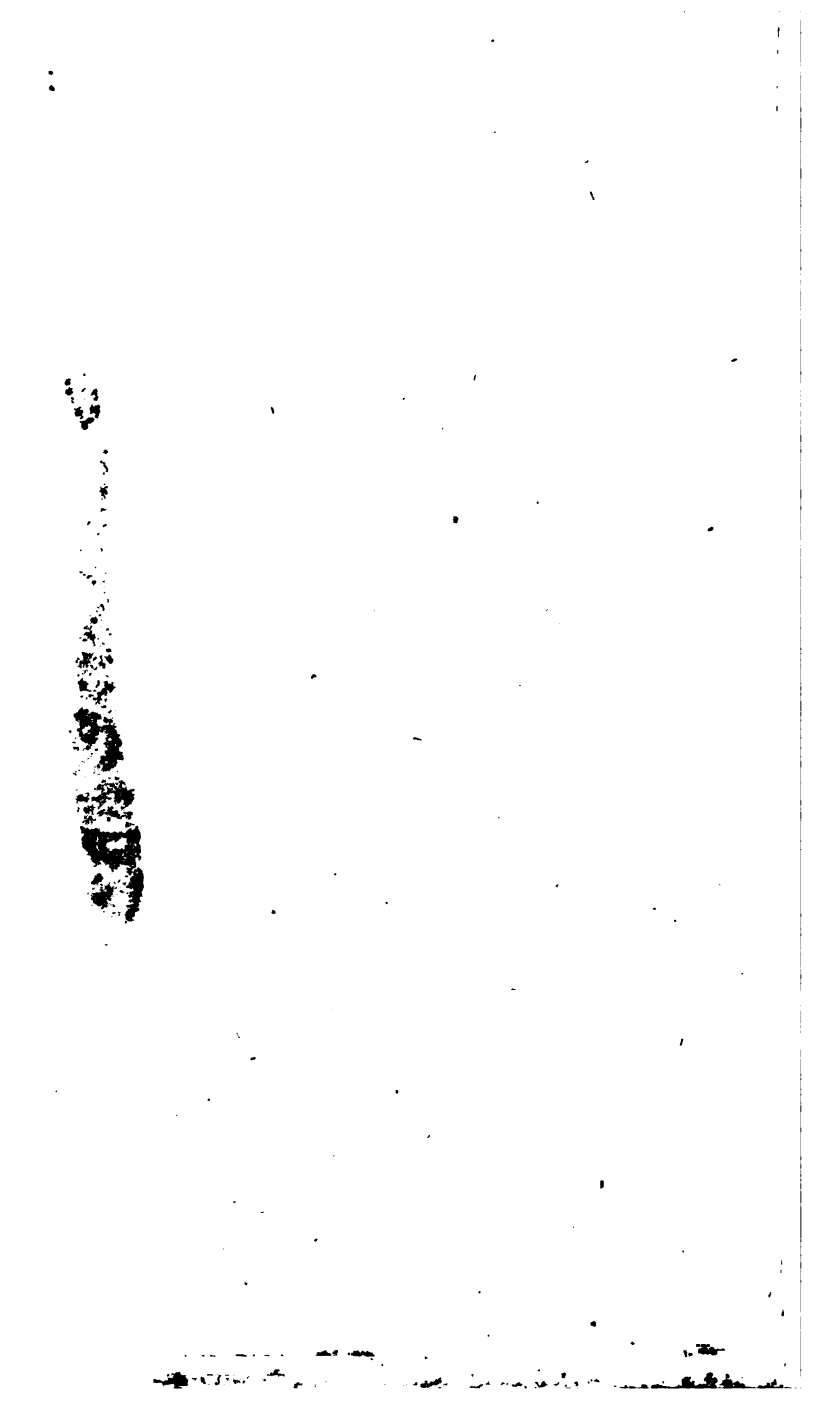
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